OCT 10 1957

PRESENTED TO
THE DAYTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BY

Sigmund Metzler

Dayton, Ohio

3156 1247 10M 8-32

NATHAN SITES

E. Sites.

NATHAN SITES

AN EPIC OF THE EAST

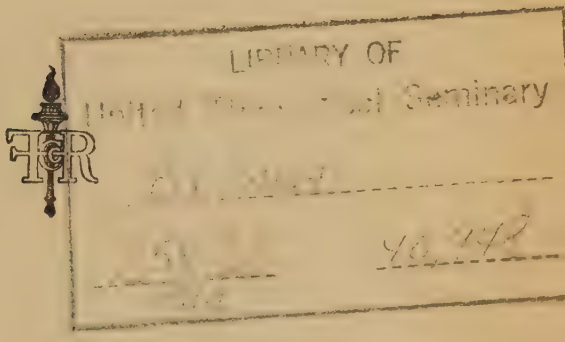
BY

S. MOORE SITES

With Introduction by

BISHOP WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

Of The Methodist Episcopal Church


LIBRARY OF
Seminary

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1912, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 125 N. Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond St., W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

INTRODUCTION

IN modern missions nothing is more fascinating, instructive, encouraging and thrilling than the lives of those who are enacting the new Acts of the Apostles. On the foreign field we seem to be back again in the early years of the Christian Church, to be living over again the experiences of those who first carried Christianity to now Christian people. And every mission field has its superb and shining example of devotion, courage, self-sacrifice, faith, statesmanship and Christian wisdom. Every field proudly treasures certain great and famous names, and uses them as names to conjure with. These are the recognized vintage of the Church universal.

Some achieve general reputation, others a local recognition which is beyond all words. Every mission is richly blessed in the lives of some who have done or are doing an immortal work, without reaching such fame as Livingstone's or Carey's or Martyn's. The time always fails us to tell of many who, through their faith, subdued kingdoms, ruled righteously, gained the fulfilment of God's promises, shut the mouths of lions, quelled the fury of the flames, escaped the edge of the sword, found strength in the hour of weak-

328534

ness, were valiant in war, routed hostile armies and did those other marvellous deeds that belong to the life of faith.

Christian history has nothing finer in any of its pages than the records of some of these men and women. All round the world we heard such names spoken with reverence and affection. It would be easy to mention many, for it is truly a "glorious company."

High on the roll of those who have, and who richly deserve such recognition, is the name of the man whose life's story these words inadequately and imperfectly introduce—the Rev. Nathan Sites, whose name is "writ large" in the annals of the Church in the Chinese Empire.

He was the first alumnus of the Ohio Wesleyan University to go to a foreign field. Scores have followed him since and others wait to go.

In a real sense, these two sentences tell the whole story. Dr. Sites was always going ahead himself, and ever leading others into good work. Himself a true missionary, he has left to the world a missionary family, and a large missionary succession. Many American men and women were led by him to give their lives to foreign missions as their life work. Many Chinese men and women were led by him to the service of their countrymen through the Christian ministry.

At Foochow, the name of Nathan Sites is as ointment poured forth. There he lived and labored, and after nearly forty years of toil, fell. There he lies buried near Bishop Wiley, and

others of our heroic and sacred dead. There one day, a few months ago, a little group of us stood and thanked God for the lives and services of those who there sleep in Him. There we prayed together that their well-begun work might be made perfect in China's redemption.

This volume is written with love by one who, through the long years, worthily shared the life and labors of this man of God. Their children at home and on the foreign field arise and call them blessed, and a great host, which no man can number, have entered in, and will yet enter in to the eternal city because Nathan Sites lived before them his faithful life, and told them the story of Jesus Christ.

For many years Dr. Sites had his membership in the North Ohio Conference. I count myself honored to have had my own Conference membership in the body to which he belonged. I am doubly honored in being permitted to write a brief foreword in this loving record of his faithful and useful life.

WILLIAM FRASER MCDOWELL.

Mine is not a love story, yet it is a story of love. It is the story of a life rich in itself and richly interlived with other lives. The melody of that life, as it still sings itself in my heart, has long since grown to be a symphony in the lives of wide communities. Many who have loved the melody have wished that more might learn the symphony,—if I can but teach it.

S. MOORE SITES.

CONTENTS

The Motive

I. *The First Recruit* 17
II. *A Pioneer Poet* 19
III. *Reveille* 22
IV. *The "Cathay"* 26

The Invincible Gospel

V. *An Outpost: The First Skirmish* . . 33
VI. *Enlistments* 41
VII. *Reconnoitring* 48
VIII. *The Oldfield Trail* 51
IX. *Footnotes on the Oldfield Trail* . . 60
X. *Monkeys and Mandarins in Bonnieburn* 66
XI. *Among the Rapids* 79
XII. *In the City of Lingering Peace* . . 83
XIII. *Seven Golden Candlesticks* . . . 89

The Treble Note

XIV. *At the Temple of Eternal Spring* . . 97
XV. *A Song of Deliverance* 104
XVI. *The Girls' Drill Ground* . . . 109
XVII. *High Finance* 114
XVIII. *Ground-Breaking* 118

THE CHURCH MILITANT

XIX.	*A Buccaneer Apostle*	*123*
XX.	*Comrades of the Cross*	*130*
XXI.	*Commissariat*	*135*
XXII.	*Larger Strategy*	*140*
XXIII.	*An Armory*	*147*
XXIV.	*Martial Music*	*154*
XXV.	*Interlude: When the Heart Sings*	*156*
XXVI.	*The Arsenal*	*167*

UNDERTONE

XXVII.	*The Cost*	*177*
XXVIII.	*The Campaign Renewed*	*182*
XXIX.	*Battle Scars*	*188*
XXX.	*Broken Melody*	*197*

THE TRIUMPH SONG

XXXI.	*Young Men for War*	*205*
XXXII.	*Home from the Front*	*215*
XXXIII.	*Peace Hath Her Victories*	*218*
XXXIV.	*An Overtone*	*224*
XXXV.	*The Hallelujah Chorus*	*231*
XXXVI.	*The Singer*	*238*
XXXVII.	*Camp-fire*	*242*

THE DOMINANT CHORD

"*In the Footsteps of a Man.*" *By W. S. Bissonnette* *247*

ILLUSTRATIONS

PHOTOGRAPHS, HAND-COLORED:

The Rice Mill 37
Temple-Bridge 51
A Gentleman of the Old School 70
Lotus Flower Mountain, near the Upper Min . 79
Ku-shan—Entrance to Monastery Grounds . . 97
The floating population of a Chinese village . . 115
Young China,—We are coming your way . . 117
The Ascent to Ku-shan—Rock Inscriptions . . 139
Timber Rafts on the River Min 188
Nathan Sites Memorial Academy, Yen-ping . . 196
White Pagoda and Temple Hill, Scene of Battle, 1911 203
Transportation in China 215

IN TONE:

Nathan Sites . . . . . Frontispiece
A sullen fleet of junks, anchored as if for all time . 32
The Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages stretched like a dragon across the Min 33
Unspoiled Human Nature 41
Clearwater 48
The road mounts the ridges with well-made stone steps 54
A water-buffalo preparing the rice fields . . 55
The merchandise is slung from springy bamboo poles 55

A nice warm firebasket 56
The great god Budd, fifteen feet high and overlaid with gold 57
Our faithful guide 64
In the angle of the city wall, Christian schools now flourish 65
Safely sheltered from the waters 82
The City of Lingering Peace 83
Seven Golden Candlesticks 89
On the Road to the City of Eternal Spring, a Mandarin's Grave 98
Festival Styles at the Temple of Eternal Spring . 99
The "Outlook" of the Non-Christian Bride in Hinghua 106
Woman's Sphere 107
Where East and West Meet 110
Crooning the Classics 111
The Buccaneer Apostle 128
Among the black rocks, on a quiet hillside, near the church he last served 129
A Drowsy Village of the Hinghua Region . . 144
Blossoms from the Kindergarten 156
'Tis the Wedding Morning 156
Rapid Transit 166
A houseboat waited at the jetty for the turning of the tide 167
Supper-time 184
Not a spring mattress, but plain boards . . . 184
Dr. Sia 224
Nathan Sites Memorial Good Shepherd Hospital,— Clearwater 236
The Mission Cemetery, Foochow 237
By Lone Sea-breakers 248

THE MOTIVE

"I cannot in the valley stay,
The wide horizons call away,
The very cliffs that wall me round
Are ladders unto higher ground."

I

THE FIRST RECRUIT

IT was chapel hour at Ohio Wesleyan. Students thronged through the doorways to their places, but there were signs of suppressed excitement in the air. A day or two before, a certain student, having been disciplined by the Faculty for some misdemeanor, had angrily taxed another with "peaching" on him. This fellow-student would neither deny nor admit. The irate one, nursing his wrath to keep it warm, was now darkly threatening to dirk the man who, he thought, had told.

This student, sitting quietly among his classmates, had not the aspect of a tattler. He was of sturdy build and frank countenance, betokening a youth trained in the open life of the farm, and in the atmosphere of a Christian home. The men nearest him seemed to incline toward him with an air of comradeship which said that they liked him and believed in him.

The Faculty came in—grand men in the strength of their prime—and took the big chairs in which they always sat, across the back of the platform. There were Frederick Merrick, L. D. McCabe and the rest, and in their midst Thom-

son. Here was a president who really ruled, but with such grace and vision that one thought of him not as an autocrat but as seer and leader and mighty friend. After prayers he rose to speak.

Quietly he drew the lightning from the crowd. Perhaps faculties and students lived closer together in those days of small things than now. Frankly he told the facts, that the student accused of tale-bearing had really given no information, but he had not denied because he wanted to keep the trouble maker from laying the blame on some other man. Then the seer in Thomson flashed out. "Give me a regiment of such men," he exclaimed, "and I will take the world!"

Thomson's Regiment is filling up; and that student was his first recruit.

II

A PIONEER POET

THE father of Nathan Sites was a genius. He was homely in wit and naïve in manner, eminently practical and with a knack of succeeding. He was also, in his own quaint way, a poet. His poetry was of the accidental quality, without malice prepense. In his journal he would often begin recording his reflections in prose, then, as the thought warmed his heart, the words would drop into rhyme. Bear with him a moment while, at three score years and ten, he recounts the story of his life's highest joy and deepest loss:

On the twenty-Eighth day of February,
In the year of our Lord Seventeen hundred
Ninety-nine, a lovely Child was Born.
She was so innocent, so fair, so sweet,
And as in age she grew,
She grew in favor with all she knew,
In Eighteen Hundred and Eighteen,
She was by the Spirit born again,
In eighteen-hundred and twenty seven,
To Me Her Sweet right hand and heart were given,
In Eighteen Hundred and Seventy,
It pleased the Lord to take Her from Me.

. . . . . .

Half of Myself, the Lord has taken,
And yet I feel I am not forsaken,

I hear My Saviour say, fear not, I am with you,
Be faithful until death, and I will Save you too,
All these hopes I owe to my Lord and Saviour,
To whom be glory now and Forever. Amen.

The loved one thus lost was by name Sarah Fidler. Her father was one of the pioneers who emigrated from Pennsylvania, in the early years of the nineteenth century, to the great Northwest Territory. When young Robert Sites, strong in heart and limb, coming from old Virginia to seek his fortune, won her sweet right hand and heart, he laid their hearth-stone hard by a spring on a fertile slope in Richland County, among the Ohio hills. The tract of land which he then bought is still in the family. With his own hands Robert Sites squared the logs to build their cabin. Here Nathan Sites was born; and here he grew up to robust young manhood.

When he went to college at the City of the Sulphur Spring he took with him various odd lots of book-learning from the country school, and a good kit of carpenter's tools which he knew how to use. So he worked hard at his lessons, and built houses and health in his play time. Sometimes his father drove over the forty miles from home in the spring wagon with apples and good things which Mother had prepared. It was a happy, busy life for him and he helped to make it happy for others.

Boys found him a superb friend. "He was so joyous, so instructive, so gentle, so vigorous," says one, "that I can only think of him as my

blessed play-fellow." Old residents of Delaware recall a Boys' Club, which he created while a student there, as the most successful thing of the kind they ever knew. He had in it half a hundred youngsters, ten to fifteen years of age, whom he fairly magnetized as he guided them into paths of Christian manhood.

For during his six years at college he had learned something better than books. He had entered another apprenticeship, with a Master who Himself was once a carpenter, and was already learning to help the Master build men.

III

REVEILLE

IN a little Ohio town the preachers of the North Ohio Conference were assembled in annual session. It was the evening of the missionary address. On the platform was a man who had seen twelve years of service in China. China was frightfully far off,—on the earth, but on the under side of it. You took half a year to get there and likely as not you would never get back.

One young man in the audience was studying the speaker intently. He had been graduated from college the year before, 1859. Now he was just finishing his first year as junior preacher on a country "circuit." While at college he had often debated, in the old missionary Lyceum, with his chum Scott, and C. C. McCabe and other zealous souls. Scott rather championed China and McCabe India, but Sites inclined to Africa. Here at last was a live missionary, and from China—Rev. R. S. Maclay.

The opening hymn was announced. As the junior preacher lifted heart and voice in the ecstasy of faith and hope and youth, some one thrust a letter into his hand. It was from Bishop

Baker. In it the Bishop asked if he would be willing to go as a missionary to China.

It struck him as a summons to duty. He was thrilled through and through. He had never told any one how, ever since his conversion, he had felt a yearning to carry the gospel to those in darkest heathenism.

With keen interest he listened to every word, sought a brief interview with the speaker, then hastened to his room and fell upon his knees in thanksgiving and prayer to God for guidance. Then, without waiting to confer with flesh and blood, he replied to the Bishop that he was willing to go.

He did not dare delay his answer, and risk seeing his mother's tears. He did not dare even question what might be the decision of the woman he loved. It was God's call; and he obeyed.

"When you go, Nathan, we shall never meet again in this world."

These were his mother's words, uttered in sadness after his parents had given their blessing. And what she said proved true.

When he came to my home, all was not smooth and of one accord. I was dumb with wonder and confusion. But how could I refuse what he, who had been so honored of God and the Church, asked of me? Besides I was willing to go with the man I loved to the ends of the earth. But I was not certain that I was the person to go as the wife of a missionary.

My mother was grief-stricken.

"Such a sacrifice is not to be thought of!" she cried. My father—I can see his radiant smile now as he clasped my lover's hand.

"I would rather my daughter should go with you, as a missionary to China," he said, "than go as wife of the ambassador to any kingdom on earth."

There was not harmony among the members of the family. I felt condemned to cause my mother grief, and it pierced my heart to see her tears. But in the weeks of preparation, as they sped by, we all tried hard to be cheerful. Mr. Sites came often, always bringing brightness and inspiration, and making it seem easier to go on with our work.

We tried, in public libraries, to find books on China. We wanted to learn something about that mysterious country and people. There was almost nothing to be found. It seemed that we were going we knew not whither. Even our missionary secretary had no accurate perception of our needs in going to that strange land. We were instructed to get everything we should need in clothing and house furnishing to last five years or more!

I had always supposed my wedding would be the greatest event of my life. Now there was another overshadowing it. The invitations were out; we were to be married in the little white church in the valley. For weeks Father was meeting neighbors and old friends who would say:

"I'd like to be at that wedding. I'd like to see a couple married who are going off to China."

Father would reply:

"Come! Come and bring your family. I want all our neighbors to feel that they are invited."

And they came.

IV

THE "CATHAY"

A BRIGHT June morning rose on the tea wharves along the New York water front. The clipper ship "Cathay" was ready to sail for China. Our party for Foochow included the man who had made the address on China, that eventful night eight months before, and his wife, who became, as it were, a second mother to me.

The sailing of missionaries was an event in those days. The whole staff of missionary secretaries and a Bishop or two, besides many New York clergymen, were on hand to see us off.

As for me, I was glad the good-byes that really counted had been said at the old home on the hill, hundreds of miles back. But Mr. Sites missed me from the deck, and came to find me in the cabin writing more last words to Mother.

While the great clocks of the city were striking twelve, the order was given, "Let her go." A little tugboat drew us from our moorings and we were really afloat—adrift, it seemed—moving Chinaward.

There was singing on the pier; and as we swung out into the channel, an answering strain from the ship:

"Shall we whose souls are lighted,—
Shall we to men benighted
The light of life deny?"

Fainter and fainter echoes from the shore; fainter outlines of familiar forms; the city sinks slowly into the sea; solid land becomes a dream. Then as day after day passes, with no prospect but the heaving waters, endlessly the same, we wonder that there could ever be so much of anything! And some of us wish a thousand times for the fulfilment of the promise:—

"There shall be no more sea."

Next morning, Sunday, while I was attempting to dress, but too seasick to do so, Mr. Sites came telling me with much zest, how delightful it was on deck; that he had seen the sunrise and had read his Bible lesson, sitting astride the yardarm, halfway up the mainmast.

The course was southeast, crossing the Equator and doubling the Cape of Good Hope; then eastward and northeast across the Indian Ocean. We got not a glimpse of the coast of Africa. Some days we made very little progress; indeed, for many days, we rolled becalmed under the heat of the tropical sun. Occasionally, a favoring wind drove us onward as much as two hundred and fifty miles in a day. After eighty-three days without a sight of land, we were thrilled by the cry, "Land ahoy!" from the lookout sailor at the masthead. Our untrained eyes could discern nothing but a dark streak like a cloud on the horizon. Mr. Sites hastened to climb the mast and soon,

from his perch near the top, he called to us that he had a good view of land—the strange, tropical island of Java. We dropped anchor in the harbor of Anjer, and here received our latest news from the Civil War.

The captain announced that we might take the ship's small boats and go off to the island to return in about three hours. Those of us willing to brave that broad stretch of water were lowered in a rattan arm-chair by ropes over the side of the vessel. Our feet were fairly dancing to touch, once more, solid earth and green grass.

We called on the wife of the Dutch Governor of the island, who politely received us in her pretty vine-covered bungalow, and served sweets and fruits. We walked at leisure through the grounds, admiring the strange, tropical verdure, the fruits and flowers, and the birds of rare plumage. We tried to veil our eyes from the crudity of man outside the sheltering walls, but were unable to escape the shock which this first view of unkempt heathenism brought.

Other boats had been sent to secure fresh provisions for the ship. These came back, laden with immense branches of bananas, hundreds of cocoanuts and yams, sweet potatoes, eggs and dozens of young chickens. For days afterwards we revelled in luxuries, and almost forgot the miseries of the past voyage.

When we had sailed through the Straits of Sunda the monsoon came to our aid and we had a stiff, steady wind which drove us gloriously

on until, in about the latitude of Hong Kong, it failed us. Our ship made sharp tacks but very little progress. After some days we were said to be in the region of Amoy. Here the captain decided to put in and land his Amoy and Foochow passengers instead of carrying us all to Shanghai, his port of destination.

There was no Suez Canal in those days, but the American and European mails were carried across the isthmus by rail and the China missionaries all along the coast, wherever there were missions, had learned of the sailing of the " Cathay " from New York, and the names and destination of her passengers.

There was a flutter of excitement among the group of Americans and English at Amoy, when one morning they descried the " Cathay " in the outer harbor. They were soon in their small native boats, coming rapidly toward us. We gazed and wondered, " Be they men or no? " They were dressed in white trousers and short white linen coats buttoned to the neck, and wore white helmets on their heads. We were coming into a strange world; perhaps these were the peculiar inhabitants! They drew nearer and then we heard English words and shouts of welcome.

After a delightful week in Amoy, a small coast steamer from Hong Kong brought us in fifteen hours to Pagoda Anchorage, in the Min River, twelve miles below Foochow City. Thence a rowboat, manned by six or eight Chinese, carried us at last to our landing, and our journey of one

hundred and one days from New York was over.

It was the nineteenth of September, 1861. We were very glad and happy. Mr. Sites scarcely knew whether he was in the body or out of the body, so overjoyed was he to stand on the mission ground where his thoughts and prayers had centered since the day of his appointment.

Behind him,—a waste of waters; before him,—a waste of men! Deep in the heart of each drop in this sea of humanity he knew there was hidden a rainbow of hope. It was his to help flash upon men the quickening sunlight of love.

THE INVINCIBLE GOSPEL

Up in the Grindelwald valley a Swiss mountaineer, clad in homespun, stands all day long blowing his Alpine horn. It is a simple song; but a great cliff catches it, and flings it to another, and this still to another, until the whole valley is flooded with a wonder of haunting melody. Weeks after, the traveler hears those marvellous strains in his dreams. And the magic is not in the horn, nor in the player; but in that he has found the place where the mighty hills must respond.

Sometimes to a great soul it has been given to find that magical relation to the hearts of men—and the music he has awakened thrills and lingers unto this day.

A sullen fleet of junks,
anchored as if for all time.

The Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages
stretched like a dragon across the Min.

V

AN OUTPOST: THE FIRST SKIRMISH

WE were really in China! Cheerful coolies carried us in sedan chairs through narrow, jostling market streets and up a long flight of wet stone steps. They turned into a gateway and we found ourselves in a "compound," near the crest of a long, low hill overlooking the river.

This was the Hill of Heavenly Rest. A great Buddhist temple of the same name stands near. From our window we look down to the Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages, with its massive stone beams and piers, stretching like a dragon across the Min. On the river, myriad busy small craft, all of the same pattern; below the bridge a sullen fleet of junks, anchored as if for all time; on the bridge, two throbbing, thronging streams of life intent on getting somewhere; on either side of the river, a wilderness of roofs; beyond and above all, a glory of eternal hills.

"Compound" was a strange new word to us. In meaning, as in sound, it suggests having things in common. Within the walls of our mission compound we found four well-built two-story houses with airy ceilings and broad verandas. In those days there was no provision for flight to moun-

tain or shore in the season of stifling heat. Already the hardships of the first few years, when only Chinese houses were available, had left their record where you can read it to-day, in the mission cemetery, on stones inscribed to young wives. We found four families in the mission, and with one of them we made our home.

On the voyage my husband had improved his time and learned a little Chinese with the help of Dr. Maclay. Now we gave ourselves wholly to study. I was ambitious to get on as fast as my husband. There were no helps to elucidate the maze of hieroglyphics. We had Morrison's dictionary, but that gave little or no aid to a beginner. We were advised to start in by reading the Gospel of John. Our Chinese teacher sat at one end of our study table, my husband at one side, I at the other. The teacher did not understand a word of English, nor we a word of Chinese. Each had a Chinese Gospel of John before him; the teacher, in a loud, full voice, articulated the sound of the first character in the first verse. We repeated it after him, but by the shake of his wise head we knew our pronunciation was not satisfactory. After we had been digging laboriously for a few days, Mr. Gibson came in one morning and found us hard at it. Mr. Sites fired a few questions at him about singular and plural nouns and about genders and other grammatical constructions.

"Never mind about those things," he said with a hearty laugh.

"But how shall we ever make these sounds mean anything?" we asked.

"Just keep on as you are doing," he answered, "and the meaning will come to you by and by."

How provoking! I was fairly ready to cry, as he went out. Mr. Gibson had been studying several years, and was able to preach! But I caught a cheery light in my husband's face as he exclaimed, with a ring of victory in his voice:

"We came to China to preach the gospel and we are going to do it!"

As the months went on and we began to recognize a few words as having some meaning, each of us was eager not to be outdone by the other. The first work assigned to me was the charge of the orphans, in a small building on the corner of the mission compound. Every morning after breakfast I went over to administer soap and water, or perhaps a poultice, to the tiny bodies which had been given such an unfair start in life. My husband used the same hour for a little run down to the Long Bridge, where from the passing throngs some men stopped to look at the stranger and the books he had brought. When he came back, exulting in a new phrase he had caught from the crowd, I would answer by flaunting a few words learned from the old women who nursed the babies. So we passed our first year, in a vigorous encounter with the "plain speech," not knowing what special work lay before us.

Now there was talk in the mission of making

a new venture—an advance into the regions beyond. It was thought it might be for the furtherance of the work if one of the families should move out twelve miles to a Chinese village where there were eight or ten Christians. All our Christians at that time numbered less than one hundred, and only six or seven men were being taught to become helpers.

Near by this central village were scores of other places, large and small, where there were no Christians and no knowledge of the purpose for which missionaries had come to China. I felt sure that to get into such work was an opportunity in which Mr. Sites would rejoice. But down in my heart I felt confident our Superintendent would not ask us to go, for had we not just come into possession of our first wee baby? And did not croup and measles and sore eyes and scarlet fever, and all those cruel ailments, wait in Chinese villages to lay hold on babies? No physician would be within call, and there would be no means of communication with Foochow except by a Chinese rowboat on the Min, or a special messenger sent on foot the long twelve miles. No, surely we would not be sent!

But the appointment did fall to Mr. Sites; and with the courage of youth and inexperience mingled with some dread, we started up river on the favoring tide, for our new home and new undertaking.

A printed item from the mission Superintendent's letter of that time said, " Mr. Sites expects

The Rice Mill.

to start to Oxvale with his family, on Saturday. He is admirably qualified for his new field of usefulness, and they go with cheerful hearts. This enterprise indicates real progress in the work of evangelizing China, and if successful will be the initiation of similar movements elsewhere."

The little village stood three miles back from our landing point on the Min. A crowd quickly assembled as we came ashore—to welcome us, shall I say? No; to see the rare sight, a foreign woman with her little white baby.

The crowd increased, encircled us, became dense. All too soon to satisfy their curiosity, my husband hurried Baby and me into a sedan chair, the coolies picked it up, and we were whisked off over the main highway, a beaten path one foot wide, which wound about between small, garden-patch rice fields. It was just after the season of planting and the green blades were up a few inches out of the deep mud, and inundated with flowing water from irrigation ditches.

Into this morass I knew a misstep would land me and my precious baby. I held my breath and a tight grip as I watched my bearers' nimble feet. I did not then know, as I learned later, how sure-footed these chair-bearers were and how fully they could be depended on.

Across the valley on a slight elevation there stood and still stands a wide-spreading banyan, offering grateful shade. From this point we had a view of our little chapel beyond a farther valley. A few minutes later my sedan was put down

at the door, and I took a swift and eager survey of our new home.

It was a low building with mud walls; the large central room was the chapel, with a floor of hard dry beaten mud. Our sitting-room and bedroom was on one side, the dining-room and study on the other; and into these rooms Mr. Sites on a previous trip had put board floors.

The village people gradually gathered in to see and greet us. I scanned the women's faces as eagerly as they scanned mine. Among them all there was no familiar face. Here was the place that was to be home to us for the next three years!

Our first year of village life was well advanced. It had been a busy year, with many interests absorbing time and thought. Mr. Sites was still studying hard at the language. But when on the programme of our approaching annual meeting, as drafted by the brethren in Foochow, I saw the name "Nathan Sites" set down for the "Conference sermon," I was in dismay. It seemed like mockery that older missionaries should presume to put so heavy a responsibility on him.

"What are you going to do about it?" I asked.

"Do about it?" he answered. "Why, prepare it, of course."

He set to work, wrote the sermon in English. then dictated it to his teacher, sentence by sentence, in the best Chinese he could command; and the teacher revised it, supplying here an apter term and there the proper idiom. This was not

done in a day, nor several days. It was worked over and improved, prayed over and re-written and studied, until I took courage and began to feel it was bound to be a success.

When the time for this Annual Meeting arrived, in the fall of '63, we closed our little house for a month and went to Foochow.

The Mission had no ordained native preachers, and the missionaries held their ministerial relations in America, so we called this an "Annual Meeting," with the Superintendent presiding. All the native assistants were present, with the missionaries and their wives, besides a number of our "American Board" friends.

The evening for Mr. Sites' sermon came. He proceeded with the opening exercises. We had no trepidation about that part, for he had been able to read the Scriptures smoothly for many months; he was fluent in prayer, and the rhythm of hymns in these queer sounds was a delight to his musical ear. But when he opened the Bible and read his Chinese text, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me," my heart thumped in terror. But it was only for a moment, as I shut my eyes and prayed. He had discarded his manuscript, and had only a few notes on a small leaf of paper. Would he hesitate and would those thoughts all in Chinese get confused and bring embarrassment and failure? He had not spoken a minute before I knew that God on whom he relied was with him and speaking

through him. In his closing words he reminded us that on the day of Pentecost, the disciples, like ourselves, numbered only a few tens, and the apostles but twelve. To them Christ said, " Go teach all nations "; so speaks He also to us.

When the doxology had been sung and the benediction pronounced, all gathered lovingly about the speaker in congratulation and with words of hearty appreciation. From that time onward his reputation as a smooth speaker of the language grew. As his vocabulary increased, and his grasp of Chinese idioms widened, it was said of him that to hear his voice, not seeing the speaker, one would suppose a Chinese was speaking.

The recruit had fought his first set battle, the battle with the language, and had won.

Unspoiled Human Nature.

VI

ENLISTMENTS

ALL the time at Oxvale, Mr. Sites was studying Chinese character of a sort not found in books.

In the hill villages back of ours he found the endless interest of unspoiled human nature,—unspoiled, at least, by contact with the outer world. Mornings, the séance with the teacher, afternoons preaching in the unexplored villages —this was fulness of life. Not a path but led to a surprise; not a greeting but brought some new freshness into life, at least for the apostle and doubtless also for the house upon which he pronounced "peace."

In one of these excursions he came to a village where lived a young teacher of whom he had already heard. It was only a handful of village boys the pedagogue had in his school, each one singing at the top of his voice the lessons to be memorized, as every one must who wishes to know the Confucian classics. On set days he led his pupils in performing prostrations before the tablet of the Great Sage. There was something in this teacher's bearing, however, which showed that he was not mastered by his circumstances;

one might guess that Buddha's answer to the riddle of life was not satisfying to him.

From the first the two men were attracted to each other. There was a return visit, then an interchange of polite tokens, in consequence of which the Confucianist found himself the possessor of an attractive book called the "Holy Classic" which he had never seen before, telling of a Greater than Confucius. We had a little school of our own at that time, a group of village boys and girls whom I had gathered into the chapel six days a week for study, as well as on Sunday for Sabbath school. We lacked a good teacher for the Chinese classics; we invited the Confucianist, and he accepted.

Some days Mr. Sites was away on all-day preaching tours. I recall the embarrassment which I felt when I conducted morning prayers, in my imperfect Chinese, in the presence of the Confucian scholar. But before long it was evident that we had in him a devout student of the Word. He was reading his new Classic daily. He soon became convinced of the error of idolatry and then convicted of his own sins.

Before the end of the year he resolved to run away from his convictions. He resigned his position and took a school in a village six miles off. He still read his Bible and often on Sundays would dismiss his school and walk over to our services. One Sunday morning he arose in our little chapel and confessed his faith in Christ.

Well do I remember the joy of the Sunday even-

ing a few weeks later, when Mr. Sites, returning from a quarterly meeting, told me he had that day baptized, with others, our Confucian teacher.

This man was Sia Sek Ong. Thenceforth his life grew in grace and power, and, like the dominant motive in a symphony, became ever clearer and stronger and richer in its influence upon the life of the native church.

Mr. Sia immediately began preaching, in a modest way, often going out with Mr. Sites on his evangelistic tours. On Sundays they would visit nearby villages where Christians lived, to give instruction in the Bible, especially teaching the observance of the Sabbath as necessary for growth in Christian character. Gradually the household meetings developed into a village church, and this in turn became a light which shone to other villages.

Among the little group of Christians whom we had found at Oxvale were two brothers, blacksmiths, named Lee. One of them became generally known as "the Converted Blacksmith." He had a love for books and a mighty thirst for knowledge of God. He used to keep his Bible open on his anvil so that he might study in the intervals of his work.

Mr. Sites improved with zeal and energy every opportunity to advance him in a course of theological studies, securing for him the most desirable books printed in Chinese. Mr. Lee's influence on Mr. Sia, when the teacher was seeking for light, was most helpful and illuminating. At

the same time his own spiritual life deepened and his sermons won men from their idols to Christ.

Both Lee and Sia were to become the missionary's comrades in many a hard campaign in after years, all up and down the Min valley.

In our early life in Oxvale, before these longer tours commenced, Mr. Sites always planned to be at home nights. Now we had become accustomed to our new environment and I had learned to love and trust the people. Mr. Sites went out one morning with his Chinese comrades to certain villages some distance away. The day passed and at dusk a messenger brought me a note from him, saying he found it would be difficult to get back that night; moreover, many of the villagers, who were mostly farmers, had time to hear preaching only in the evening, so it seemed best that he should stay over night. There was to be a large meeting in a temple, where there would be good opportunity to preach. This was the first of many nights Baby Belle and I spent alone in our little home, and no harm came to us.

The experience of one such night, however, is burned in upon my memory. It was Saturday. My husband was going to hold all-day services on Sunday at a village some miles away. As he started up the valley I walked with him half a mile or so. When I turned back he looked up at the sky and remarked, " Those look like typhoon clouds. I hope there may not be a blow while I am gone! "

We did not apprehend any severe storm. But about sunset, the wind arose, coming in frequent blasts, each more furious than the one before. I knew my husband would by that time have reached the shelter of the village homes huddled safely in the lee of banks and boulders. But we —our baby and I—had only the pounded earthen walls of the chapel on the knoll, apart from the village houses.

All that night and all day Sunday the wind blew as a typhoon wind will; it lulls for a minute or two, then rises again with terrific force. At dark the rain began to fall; all night long it poured, and was driven in pelting torrents against our walls and roof.

Soon a great block of earth fell off the front corner of the house, with a shock that sounded as if the whole house were falling. There was a little arched doorway between my bedroom and the chapel, which looked as if it might be the safest spot. As I heard the rumble of each new onset of the storm I would snatch up my baby and stand trembling under this little arch until its fury was spent.

Thus the midnight passed with ominous sounds, now and then, of falling sections of the outer wall; again the crash of a tree uprooted; and always the increasing roar of the torrent in the ravine near by.

Monday morning dawned calm and bright with smiling sunshine as if in mockery of the havoc that had been wrought. Mr. Sites was with us

in a few hours—as soon as he could make his way over the obstacles the storm had interposed.

There was a flutter of preparation one day in my modest kitchen. I was getting ready for a guest,—and entertaining was no simple matter in those days! Everything edible had to come from Foochow by messenger; and when it came it was by no means sure to be what we had sent for. Once we despatched a man post haste for medicine and when he came back the bottle was broken!

And now a Bishop was coming! And, of all men, this one. Thomson, the beloved college president, now lately consecrated to the office of Bishop, was making the first Methodist Episcopal visitation to the Far East. It was a time of high council for the missionaries and the infant church at Foochow. Already a considerable force of native helpers had been developed, but not even then was it deemed best that any should be ordained.

The old president must needs get out on the firing line, for a day or two with his old pupil. Coming from home via Suez, he had seen Scott in India—Scott who in college was always talking China. Now Lowry and Plumb and other recruits were in training, soon to come to the field. Our little living-room at Oxvale became mellow with old memories and radiant with new visions. The "first recruit" reported beginnings made, and his plan of campaign. The Bishop met the Confucian scholar and the doughty blacksmith.

Perhaps he saw in vision a day when the former devotee of Confucius was to represent China in a great General Conference in America and lay his hands in consecration on the head of an American Bishop in the Church of the Living God. He mused, and then his eye flashed with the old prophetic fire:

"I think, my boy," said Thomson, "we have begun to take the world."

VII

RECONNOITRING

THERE was bustle and shouting in the courtyard of Wong Castle, on Clearwater. The hour was near sunset, and a little band of scholarly looking gentlemen had just stopped at the door; scholarly looking, yes, all but one; he was evidently a foreigner and wore an outlandish short coat. Still, he had a kindly look in his blue eyes, and he spoke the common speech! So the men beat off the barking dogs, the women calmed their crying babies, and the strangers were invited to come in, be seated and drink tea.

They were a proud clan, the Wongs. Between them and the Lau clan of the same Sixth Township village, there was always rivalry and sometimes feud. Their castle was a great caravansary, a series of large houses, in fact, with narrow open courts between, the whole enclosed within high mud walls. There they lived, three or four hundred of them, patriarchs, infants and all degrees of cousins, shut in from robbers and, seemingly, also from heavenly love.

Now they crowded around, young men and matrons and children, and plied the blue-eyed, brown-haired stranger with questions, just to

Clearwater.

328534
hear him use their lingo. He, on his part, entered cheerily into the spirit of the play and, making the chief of the clan sit down beside him, was soon on the footing of a familiar friend. Though there was no preaching, it soon came out that these visitors were bearers of good doctrine. Their doctrine might be heard of later; enough now that they were men of friendly spirit and culture.

"Here, Lead-a-little-brother," calls the old man to a boy, "tell your mother to prepare the guest room. These teachers must lodge here for the night."

The district city of Clearwater was across the river from Oxvale and thirty miles above. It is the first burg with walls one comes to in going up the river from Foochow.

It seemed to the pioneers a challenge to conquest, like the fenced cities of Canaan to Joshua. Like priests and Levites at Jericho, this little band of preachers had made the circuit of the city more than once, not however outside the wall but on it, and with no blare of trumpets, but seeking the best site for a chapel. Meanwhile they preached on the streets and wherever they were invited to enter, whether in temples or in private houses. Finally, in spite of what seemed insurmountable difficulties, they secured a small house and left a Christian young man, whom they had taken with them from Oxvale, to sell books and tell of Jesus and the Christian religion to any

who would hear. The party had then pushed on by rat-boat up Clearwater Creek to bring their message to the more open-minded villages.

This creek is a rocky run, like many another in the Min basin, rushing down transverse valleys to the river. The Chinese call it and the whole district Minchiang, "Min-Clear." Up along these natural avenues or following the highway over the hills the gospel message was beginning to go to the homes and hearts of the people.

Teacher Sia and the blacksmith did valiant service on this campaign. They were trying out the weapons of their warfare. The chief gains immediately apparent were the larger faith and firmer purpose manifest in the young preachers themselves. But an entrance had been made into a district in which almost every considerable village now has its chapel, and out of which have since come scores of Christian workers,—preachers, teachers, doctors,—to serve in other parts of the province and in the greater China of the Southern Seas.

Temple-Bridge.

VIII

THE OLDFIELD TRAIL

IT was April, the season of rain; not showers, but steady downpour. That was unfortunate, —but to wait for summer heat would be worse yet. The missionary had arranged with a colleague in Foochow to explore the next district, Oldfield—or, as the Chinese call it, Kucheng—opposite Clearwater but further up the river. They would take with them the converted blacksmith and another young student preacher named Pang, whom Teacher Sia had been training.

This campaign was more ambitious than the preceding. Mr. Sites had compiled a map, chiefly from native data, and was planning, with the approval of his brethren in Foochow, a steady advance upon strategic centres.

Some missionaries are born to be administrators, some to be teachers, some to be authors. Others are out-and-out evangelists. "God sent me," they say, "to preach the gospel." Their joy is to get out among men, where, in desert regions of the soul, they may see the first upspringings of the garden of the Lord.

The time, the place, and his own personality conspired to make Nathan Sites pre-eminent as

an evangelist. Zeal for the spread of the gospel and zest for new discoveries were always pushing him on. He would not be content until he had mastered that next mountain. He would not rest until he had won the friendship of that next man, and brought to him a Friend.

When Mr. Sites was away on these trips he regularly wrote journal letters, recording the events of the day. In those early days there was no postal system, but my bunch of daily letters was sent by messenger whenever opportunity offered, sometimes at intervals of a week or more. Now those old faded letters shall tell their own story so far as they may.

The party started in two little boats, well stocked with books for sale, and an auxiliary supply of our foreign food. This required burden bearers and altogether made a lengthy retinue.

Toward the end of the second day, rains poured and fierce winds so rocked the little boats that it was decided, as night came on, to go ashore, stop in a village and try to find an inn where they might sleep for the night. But as fast as the men attempted to light their lanterns, their matches were blown out. Finally by taking shelter behind a little hillock, they managed to secure a light, and then followed a path by the riverside until they came to a hamlet and found an inn. Alas!—continues the Journal—it was too crowded and unsanitary for an American. Mr. Martin and I immediately returned to the boat, which was tied up to the bank, and floundering

in the rough water. Our bed was soon spread. Mr. Martin at once opened his little Bible, and found his evening lesson. He read on and on about Moses and Aaron and his sons, the coats and girdles, and about the rams and the bullocks. . . . I did not hear more. I had leaned my head on the pillow and fallen asleep. Later I asked Mr. Martin to forgive me. I believed the Lord would, for He loved mercy more than sacrifice.

Next morning the rain had ceased and a light breeze carried us slowly onward. About dark we arrived at Watermouth, the limit of our boat travel, at exactly the time we had planned, in spite of rain, head winds, flooded river and unwilling boatmen. We had still to travel some forty miles overland to reach the district city.

In the morning we were off with much commotion and a war of words among the coolies as they equalized their loads with the precision of a court of justice. Our way led up, up, up, over the river-front cliffs, then down and along the bank of the little Oldfield River. At nine o'clock we stopped for breakfast at a wayside inn.

"Have you rice ready cooked?" I asked the landlord.

"Oh, yes; here it is," he said.

I lifted the lid and peeped into a half-bushel rice basket. Yes, there it was; red, coarse and dingy looking enough. It was the cheaper red rice that is used in all these mountain inns, and we were satisfied to try it. Our boy cook took

hold bravely, and with a remnant of cold chicken, left from our last meal on the boat, he soon prepared a dish of hot curry; this, with the unsightly red rice, made Mr. Martin and me a satisfactory breakfast. While some of us were still breakfasting, Mr. Lee, of his own suggestion, stepped forward and began preaching to the crowd that had gathered to look at us. We lingered, for Mr. Pang had come forward and followed Mr. Lee with an earnest exhortation to an interested audience.

As we pushed on, the scenery became inspiring and we made the hills and rocks echo with familiar songs. That night we slept in a wayside inn, all undisturbed save by the music of the wild waters in the little river, a hundred feet below our window. The ceaseless tumbling and roaring of the water was a constant lullaby.

The road we then were traveling is a great thoroughfare from the Min to inland cities. It is four or five feet wide, laid with stone all the way. It mounts the ridges with well-made stone steps. Wheel traffic would be impossible on such a road. There are no horses, of course; as for the water-buffalo, it is used only in mill and plough; so the merchandise which keeps the road busy is all slung from springy bamboo poles on the shoulders of men and women.

Here the road crosses a beautiful bridge of stone, a single arch forming nearly a perfect circle. Yonder a wooden bridge, the finest I have seen in China, spans the Oldfield River. It is

The road mounts the ridges
with well-made stone steps.

A water-buffalo preparing the rice fields.

The merchandise is slung
from springy bamboo poles.

about four hundred feet long, with substantial plank floor, well roofed and railed in, and supported on three superb piers of masonry resting on natural boulders.

Our way trends steadily upward. Innumerable rapids and one superbly thundering cataract in the little river, as we follow it up, prove that we are mounting a plateau far above the level of Foochow.

Arriving at Oldfield City we were assigned, by the officials, to quarters in an old temple, unfurnished except with rows of life-sized idols. There was a large central hall with a suite of rooms on each side. We chose the cleaner and better looking suite.

"Is there aught else the teacher would wish?" asked our attendants from the Mandarin's office.

"Yes, if you please, bedsteads, tables, chairs, water-jars, cooking utensils and all such necessities!"

Then such consultations and calculations as they made! Meanwhile crowds of people thronged in, filling the place and the doorways.

"Would the teacher be so considerate as to step outside and let the people look?" said our guides anxiously. "The men are breaking the paper windows and harming the walls and doors."

"Well said," I responded; "I will go out, as I see the scrub-women coming in."

The next day was the Sabbath, the first upon which any white man had opened his eyes in this city. I awoke at five o'clock. Since it was our

purpose to rent a place for a chapel here, I was eager this morning to get out to some high point for a view of "the lay of the land." At five-thirty I was off; the night watchman closed the door behind me, for all were still asleep, and so the city seemed to be also; thus I effectively escaped the crowds of yesterday. I struck out, down a back street some distance, then westward to the city wall. A night watchman returning to his home greeted me and accompanied me to the wall. He would have gone farther, but I kindly dismissed him and walked alone on the wall around the four sides of the city, with its nine gates. I estimated its circumference to be about three miles. To the north side there was an ascent of one hundred and twenty steps and on the wall here a fine temple where I found two devout worshippers, bowing before the idols. I stood a moment and they turned their attention to me; thereupon I earnestly told them of God and of Jesus, a Saviour from sin.

This northwest part of the city had not been built upon, but is cultivated in vegetable gardens and groves.

The Oldfield River runs all the length of the east side, and this accounts for its six gates leading out to the river, from each of which ply two ferryboats. It is here a beautiful smooth flowing stream a hundred yards wide.

About ten o'clock people began to come to our temple, filling the hall and outer court. Our attendants from the Mandarin's office kindly re-

A nice warm firebasket.

Page 63

The great god Budd, fifteen feet high and overlaid with gold.

arranged a platform which had lately been used for theatricals. Chairs were brought; the incense table, about ten feet long, was moved out and placed in front of us. For a background there was the permanent platform on which were seated thirty or forty idols of varying size. Back of them all, on a massive pedestal, sat, in calm dignity, "the great god, Budd," fifteen feet high and overlaid with gold. Along the two sides of the room were arranged twenty-four images, each larger than a man, with countenances angry or pleased, fierce or gay, meek or furious, with clenched fists or hands clasped in devotion. One with staring eyes seemed to look straight at Brother Lee as he preached against idolatry. Besides these occupants there was still space for more than two hundred people to stand, look and listen, as they did in silence, while one after the other of us told them of the sinfulness of idolatry, and of the true God and a Saviour from sin. They readily understood the idea of God; but had no conception of salvation from sin.

When Mr. Pang was introduced, the surroundings must have stirred his soul within him, for, like Paul at Athens, he cried, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you," and he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. When he became severe on the folly of worshipping idols, I feared some of the older fathers would not bear it. But he finished without any contention. Then I arose and spoke in a conciliatory way, telling them of the Saviour.

I had marked, standing in the crowd, a fine looking, elderly man. I had watched him during the preaching against the fallacies of idolatry, and at times I feared he was getting angry. He had now worked his way up near the front, and I stepped down to meet him. He smiled as I approached. He talked understandingly; he said we preached good doctrine but it was not suited to the Chinese, for they could not follow its teachings. I told him about the Sabbath and churches, places in which to teach and to learn, and invited him to come to our rooms. He seemed pleased, and with quiet courtesy, as we parted, bade me "Walk slowly."

Returning from an afternoon preaching jaunt, we were near our lodgings when, there in his own doorway, we saw the same old gentleman. He greeted us cheerily:

"You must be tired and thirsty. Come in and rest and drink tea."

We accepted, and talked of China's good tea and hospitality to strangers.

The next day we had set apart to see houses and, if possible, rent a place for a chapel. First we called on our friend of the day before. He suggested a certain part of the city where were several vacant houses. The people standing around heard, and each had suggestions to offer of houses available. We found some of them much too large, some old and broken almost beyond repair, and the price of others unjustly high; besides, we were looking for an attractive

location. Our day's search determined us on a choice between two places, provided we could come to terms. One was on Great Street, the other on Cross Street. Great Street was finally our decision. The house was in a good location, in excellent repair, and the rental moderate. With the help of our kind old friend, the bargain was closed, papers were made out, with official stamp affixed and some rent was paid to bind the bargain.

We returned to Foochow by a new route over the mountains, leaving Mr. Pang in the chapel to preach and teach, and a Christian brother, who had accompanied us as a burden bearer, to help him, under the name of chapel keeper.

The Lord had indeed been with us and prospered us in Kucheng, and we left behind us scores of people kindly disposed towards us and our message. It seemed like leaving a familiar place, as in the early dawn we set out from our now quiet temple.

IX

FOOTNOTES ON THE OLDFIELD TRAIL

SIX months later, a bright looking young man offered himself at the Foochow church for baptism. He told a dreary tale of a broken life,—sorrows which turned him to opium, and wretchedness of heart which could find no relief; then he said:

"In the third month, you and Mr. Martin came to Kucheng with words and songs such as never before had reached my ears. You stood on that theatrical stage, and, with your Bible in your hand, you said, 'You know what sin is, you have felt its burden, and you have prayed to the idols to give you peace. I have come to tell you of One, Jesus, who says right now to you, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest"; and "There is no other name under heaven whereby ye must be saved." Then you looked right at me, and you called out: 'Cast away the false, and receive the true.'

"I walked away down the street, and there kept sounding in my ears, 'Cast away the false, and receive the true.'

"After you had left the city, I went daily to the chapel you had rented, to argue with the

preacher, becoming every day more and more interested and convinced. We read the Bible together, and I went home only to eat and sleep. I now knew I must give up opium. Oh, I was so miserable! I felt that I must stay near the preacher and perhaps his prayers would help me.

"I asked Mr. Pang, 'Now, that opium has such a hold upon me, how can I give up using it?' He said, 'Go and pray to God; when you feel the craving most, go into that little room, fall upon your knees and ask the Saviour to help you.'

"He prayed with me too, and encouraged me, and then he allowed me to bring my bed and my rice and stay there with him all the time, and thus escape much temptation. After seven weeks, given to studying the Bible, and much prayer, I was perfectly cured and have had no desire for opium since. When any one asks me about a cure for opium, I reply, 'Only Jesus can cure. Go to Him in believing prayer.'"

Mr. Diong still had an income sufficient to feed and clothe him and he was determined to give his entire time to study, and to telling others of his wonderful salvation. His ambition was to prepare to preach the gospel to others. He was enjoying great peace of mind and heart; and his bodily appearance was restored to its youthful vigor.

Late autumn had come, the ideal season for country travel. Said Mr. Sites to Teacher Sia

and Brother Lee: "Let us return now and visit the brethren in Oldfield and see how they fare." So they set forth by the land route, that in going they might speak the word in other villages where it had never yet been heard. The experience of one evening on this road afforded a perfect picture of village life and of missionary personality.

Following the lead of our load-carriers,—says the Journal,—I was inside an inn almost before I knew it. The typical, cluttered rooms! One large, common bedroom! Each dirty bed occupied by one or two ghastly, half-naked opium fiends, smoking the pipe! We had traveled sixteen miles on foot that day, and crossed two high ridges in a drizzling rain. I was footsore, wet and cold. Involuntarily I prayed: "O Father, I have traveled these weary miles, to make known the riches of Thy grace. Spare me the torture of a night in this den!" We picked up our traps and moved on.

We stumbled ahead, many people following and asking rude questions. On the edge of the straggling town, there stood a large house. The outside gate was open. I approached and was met by an elderly man who asked whence we came and whither we were going. I replied that here was one who had recently come from his own faraway country; had left his wife and little child in Foochow; that his only purpose in traveling this road was that he might bring to them and the people of their district a message of good news.

By this time a score or more of people had come out of the house, among them a few elderly women. They invited me in, and, in a courteous way, offered tea. I spoke of the long, hilly road I had traveled, my weariness and the inn where I could not rest with the opium smokers.

"Yes, yes, the inns are all bad," came a motherly voice; "you can have a place in our house. It is a poor little shack and it is not clean; but my grandson will lead you; follow him across the brook."

With a wave of her hand, she disappeared out of the back door, and we followed the grandson across the brook and into the open court of a fine, large house. Here our old lady met us and handed me a nice warm fire-basket, and said she would immediately bring warm water for our feet. Deep down in my heart I prayed a Saviour's blessing on this woman and her house.

Our baggage was sent up a flight of stairs to our rooms. The old lady, seeing our food-baskets, told us to put them aside and invited us every one, burden-bearers and all, six of us, to "eat and sleep the house." She hurried around, making preparations, and soon we sat down to a good and bountiful supper. Her married son sat at the head of the table, while she was busily bustling about until sleeping accommodations were provided for all.

After supper our neighbors, some thirty or forty of them dwelling under the same roof with us, gathered in the reception hall. I explained

why we were here, and the command laid upon us to make known to them the Christian religion. Brother Sia, with open Bible in hand, was already on his feet. He told of God and the creation, of man's sin and need of a Saviour, of God's love for us in sending His Son to redeem us and of this Letter, which tells us how to escape the penalty of sin and to return to our Father. He talked for an hour. Then the blacksmith, seeing the iron was hot, got it on the anvil, and applied the blows quick and strong for another half hour.

We had a night of restful sleep. Next morning, our hosts urged us to stay over another day, or at any rate, to come to their town again, and be entertained in the same rooms.

The road was long and rough. Arriving at Oldfield City, the Chinese evangelists were exuberantly happy to be welcomed by Christians into the neat little chapel; but the missionary was all forspent. Early in the evening he lay down, but he could not sleep. So he got up and went into the service already commenced.

I had not been able to sleep—says the Journal —because I was so fascinated with one particular voice, the clear tenor voice of a boy. He would follow the tunes, even new ones, after one verse had been sung. I tried to imagine the beautiful boy I should see. But, alas! how haggard, how almost repelling! The sweet singer is the young brother of Mr. Diong, our first convert here, who was lately baptized at Foochow. This brother was apprenticed to learn a trade;

Our faithful guide.

In the angle of the city wall,

his master was an opium smoker and the boy soon fell into the same habit.

After Mr. Diong was converted and reclaimed from opium, he brought this brother back to their home and tried to make him also give up the use of opium. But he could do nothing with him. Then he got permission to keep him at the chapel where he could watch and care for him, and have the preacher pray with him. In order to make him ashamed to be seen in the street, he forbade him to have his head barbered, or to wear good clothes. But they tell me he is studying the Bible and is very fond of memorizing hymns. He is trying to break off the opium habit and become a true Christian. His brother, on our advice, is now going to have him dressed properly, so as to stimulate his self-respect. The older brother is now a fine-looking, intelligent man and prays like a bishop.

On the site of that first chapel now stands one of the finest little churches in China. Tens of others dot the valleys and hillsides of Oldfield district. Where then were only "vegetable gardens" there is now a kindergarten. Near the grove in the high angle of the city wall from which the missionary looked down that first Sabbath morning, Christian schools now flourish and a Christian hospital and Christian homes; for in the footsteps of that first prisoner of hope, thousands have come into liberty and light.

X

MONKEYS AND MANDARINS IN BONNIEBURN

WE had been back in Foochow for some months, with ever and anon a yearning memory of those three happy years at Oxvale. Baby Belle had a new doll, a little boy, lately come down from Heaven. He was very interesting to her for a few days. Then she began to feel that there were too many in the family.

"Mamma," she said to me one morning, "don't you think Grandpa wants Baby Brother in America?"

If the increase of home ties made it harder for the missionary to break away, there was no falling off in his itinerating to show it. His tours were now even longer than before, as the frontiers of the evangel were pushed farther and farther back. In his journal, however, aboard his river boat, on the first day of a new itinerary his heart would speak. Then there would be a prayer:

"O that the Lord Almighty, Who has made these rivers, valleys, mountains and people, might send a message to them by me at this time."

Again, after twenty-four days of journeyings, he records with trembling joy his doxology:

"Surely the Lord has been good to us, and to Him be all the praise, and may His blessing rest upon His own truth left with the people of this land."

"Can you tell me, Sek Ong," said Mr. Sites to teacher Sia as he studied his map one morning, "what kind of roads there are in the mountain district away beyond Clearwater? And do the people understand our speech?"

"Mountainous indeed it is," replied Sia, "and wooded and very high; there is snow in winter, but the roads are fair. The people know nothing of foreigners. They speak a tongue of their own; but their trading people often come to Foochow, and so our speech is understood by many."

"Have you ever traveled there?" asked the missionary.

"No."

"Will you go with me?"

"I could not presume," was the polite reply, "but if Teacher Sites desires it I am happy to go."

The rendezvous was the castle home of the Wong clan at the Sixth Township village of Clearwater, and there was to be an early morning start for the district city of Bonnieburn, called by the Chinese Yuki, fifty miles over the mountain paths.

We had not gone five minutes out of the city—says the Journal—before we were at the foot of the mountain. A boy, with a carrying pole, was in our company.

"Who are you?" I said, "and where are you going?"

"To Yuki," he answered.

"To what place?"

"To Siong Lang."

"Do you go by Ke Pang?"

"Yes."

"Can we arrive there to-day?"

"Yes, I go farther."

"Good. You can lead us through the mountain paths."

"Oh, yes, I know them well."

"Do so, sir, and we will give you dinner and a little money."

So we had a guide provided who brought us to the right place before night. We gave him books, told him of Jesus, paid him the cash, and parted just in sight of where we were to spend the night.

Next morning, a man who knew the way to our next place carried one of our loads. For two hours, as we marched, we saw no man or beast or bird or house. At last we came to a village of about seventy families who speak the Foochow dialect, and a local brogue besides. They showed us great kindness; cooked for us the best white rice; for my dinner they would take no pay. We offered and urged; but it was no superficial politeness on their part.

"You are teachers of good doctrine and we will not take your money," they said.

Now our road leads through a large grove of the most beautiful, tall, straight trees that I have

seen in China, many of them five feet in diameter. In the shade of their high spreading branches, I could not refrain from turning aside to kneel on the dried leaves and ask God's blessing on the kind people who dwell here. I thought of my native forests; of my father's house and lands and my loved ones, who were doubtless remembering that to-day is my birthday. Thirty-six years old! But onward I must follow our faithful guide.

The only practicable policy here where foreigners are wholly unknown is to put up at the inn. I should not want private families to be annoyed by such a crowd as follows us. And, too, we must consider their superstitions. If we were to stop in a private home, and afterward some misfortune happened to the family, or one of them were to die, their neighbors would attribute it to the mysterious influence of the foreigner. So I feel just as well satisfied with the inn fare as I would with entertainment in a private house, because we know it is best for our work.

Happening into a temple, or ancestral hall, in the evening, I found about thirty men seated around three tables at a feast. As I drew near they all left their seats and came to the door to see me. I tried to persuade them to finish their feast, but no! I must needs take a seat with them. I sat down, with my hat off, while they all had "the wedding garment" on.

"Indeed," I protested, apologetically, "I am most impolite."

"Never mind; we are of two nations and of different customs," they said.

While my birthday feast was proceeding merrily my helper spent most of his time in conversation with a fine, elderly man by the name of Ding, a real gentleman of the old school. He has a large general store near-by. He had come to the inn to call on us. He has a gray beard and frosted hair and of course wears large spectacles. He continued to cling to us until we left the place, urging us to stay longer.

Next morning, as we were starting, a younger brother of Mr. Ding came to escort us as far as his home village, more than half a mile away. At his house, he urged us to stop for tea. We did so and spent nearly an hour, preaching and talking to a house full of people. Then he stepped into a room and brought out a well-preserved copy of the Gospel of Luke, which he had received at Foochow.

As we followed the old paved road through a forest of chestnut, oak and maple we heard a racket among the branches. Looking up, we saw, —what do you suppose? A half-dozen wild monkeys, hopping from bough to bough, and from tree to tree. We stopped and laughed and shouted, while the monkeys played off farther and farther from us. Another sound in the tall trees above our heads; there sat a great grandfather monkey in the branches, sixty or seventy feet above us. He was a sturdy old fellow and not so easily disturbed as the younger ones. He fixed himself

A Gentleman of the Old School.

comfortably on a large limb, and calmly looked at us. I walked on a few paces and again called out to the saucy old fellow, and he made off.

As we went on, our guide enlivened our way with wonderful stories of the tricks of their monkeyships.

There was tumult in and around the little tavern by the highway at the edge of Bonnieburn city. A foreigner with strangely bleached skin had arrived. He was washing his face and hands; yes, he was using soap. He must be very old, for he had a full beard. And his eyes! blue! how strange!

The poor old man and woman who kept the inn knew not what to do, for the whole length of their one room was jammed full; men and boys were standing on stools, on tables, anywhere so as to see. The missionary was trying to wash and dress in order to go to pay his respects to the District Magistrate. To prevent a riot he pushed his way outdoors, in shirt-sleeves as he was, and as the crowd followed he talked to them from the steps. He besought them, if they were satisfied with seeing, to go away, and let him finish dressing. With innate courtesy they moved off, but others came. They would fill up the entire house, and the poor old lady would come and beseech the stranger to go out again. After four public appearances and four speeches, his toilet was complete, and he proceeded to the Magistrate's office.

I sent in my card,—says the Journal,—with the Bible and a map of the world. In a minute or two

I was invited in. I was conducted to the private reception room. The Magistrate came in, clad in regal robes, and made a handsome bow, I doing the same. He then conducted me to the seat of honor, and he sat by my side. Tea was brought with the usual ceremonies.

"Where are you now stopping?" he asked.

"At the inn."

"That is too small and crowded," said His Honor. "You shall have a place in a large temple."

"Thanks, thanks, Your Excellency. The inn would do, but the people are determined to see me, and the landlord cannot control the crowd. You are very kind in your offer, and we will gladly accept it for three or four days."

"Very well, very well."

I then referred him to the Christian doctrine we preach, contained in the book I had sent him.

"Yes. Thank you for it."

"The map," I added, "is quite a true representation of the various kingdoms of the earth."

"Ah, indeed. And does it show where your esteemed country is?"

I pointed out America.

"But is your esteemed country to the westward?"

"Going westward," I answered, "you reach my humble country, going eastward you also arrive there."

Then, using my teacup for a globe, I gave him his first lesson in geography; while his further

questions led to astronomy,—the sun stationary, the earth revolving. He was disposed to doubt this, and I was led into making a lengthy astronomical explanation. I found the predicting of eclipses one of the most convincing arguments.

Thus an hour passed in fruitful conversation. Again His Honor expressed thanks and said he would send a card to the head priest of the temple where we should stop. For this I expressed my gratitude, and rising, bade him remain seated. Of course he rose, and, with much warmth of manner, accompanied me across the court, out to the second gate, through which we passed, and he finally took leave of me in the presence of the crowd waiting in the street.

His interpreter, with a large red card, led us back to the inn, whence, with our baggage, we followed him to the spacious temple. As we entered the large front court, crowds of people, running before and after, shouted, "Ai-yah! Ai-yah!" laughing in simple joy to see the foreigner thus crowned with the evident favor of the mandarinate. As they crowded in and filled up the temple, an attendant asked me to speak to the people.

We preached first in the temple, then on the streets, finding a friendly reception in all quarters. In front of a Confucian temple we had an audience of two or three thousand people.

As we passed by, a poor, sallow-faced opium smoker hailed us, calling in a loud voice to know if we had medicine to cure opium smoking. He became so earnest and drew so close to me that

his breath, heavy with the drug, almost stifled me. I told him we had brought no medicine; that in my country there were no opium smokers. I could only tell him and the crowd what God had done in other cities for those who willed and prayed and relied upon His help. I gave them Mr. Diong's experience at Oldfield.

Several other men, teachers and mechanics, came to me at various times asking if I could cure them of the cursed habit of opium. They said there were more opium shops in this city than rice shops.

Sabbath morning dawned on Bonnieburn—the first. Out of brooding night the world seemed to quicken to a life of boundless promise.

Centuries ago there lived in China a sage who did for the older Chinese classics what Erasmus in Europe did for classic Greek. It was the period of renaissance in Chinese literature. This sage, who made Confucius live again, bore the surname Vermilion. His home was here in this little city of Bonnieburn. The temple erected to his memory by his proud compatriots stands beside the house in which he was born. In Chinese he is called the Master Chu.

Strange to say, this high-priest of Confucius is also a saint to Buddhist devotees. Strange to a stranger, that is; the Chinese pray to any spirit whose favor they may crave or whose wrath they may dread. In the great Buddhist monastery on Drum mountain, above Foochow, you will find a

printing-office. There, cut in large wood types, are many sayings of this sage. They are printed and sold as life mottoes for the faithful.

Here, by the shrine of this Confucian-Buddhist demi-god, was heard, on that Sabbath morning, the first echo of a hymn to Christ.

I had read as my morning lesson—says the Journal—the Epistle to the Colossians, and never before had I seen such beauty in that poem of the eternities and of the common day.

Early the people began coming into our temple to hear preaching as announced yesterday, and they continued all day. We hardly had time for our dinner; indeed a crowd was around us while we ate. Persons from all ranks and professions were our auditors. Elderly men to whom we proffered books as tokens of respect received them with polite expressions of gratitude.

The great temple lent itself admirably to aggressive evangelism. Calendars, showing how the Sundays come every seventh day, were displayed on one post, on another a sheet tract, "Jesus the Saviour," and on the wall by the door a map of the world.

Alarum! People outside throng the door, fall back to let a party in, then swarm in after them.

"A load of gifts for the teacher, from the Magistrate!"

Now, gifts should have their use; but it is well to regard them with circumspection. Often it is more blessed to decline than to receive. The unexpected acceptance of a gift sent merely as a

formality has been known to bring ruin to more than one house.

So I send my assistant to attend to the civilities with the Magistrate's deputies and accept or return what is sent, according to his judgment. His Honor, however, is evidently in earnest. Being well advised of this, I go out to express my appreciation for several fine dishes of fowl and pastry spread out on the table before me.

The deputies and the bearers still stand expectant.

"Has the Teacher another map like the one he gave the Magistrate yesterday?"

"Yes, indeed, one for each of you—and a book besides,—and some cash for these honest load-bearers."

Preaching, explaining, the work goes on. It is a great day. Two minor officials come in, and sit quietly while my student-helper expounds the Ten Commandments. Afterward, they come forward and there are mutual introductions; then one says:—

"The Magistrate is soon coming in person to call."

"Oh, no! that is too much for me to expect or accept."

"Not at all, not at all. It is quite proper."

Presently another hurrah, and again a crowd of people larger than ever, comes rushing into the temple, saying:—

"His Honor is coming! His Honor is coming!"

I quietly push my way through into my bedroom, and looking out of my window, see His Honor step out of his sedan-chair, attended by his retinue, all in official regalia. In a moment my helper comes for me. He says the servants have the tea ready. I pass outside through a covered way, and into the reception hall. We bow, and I invite the Magistrate to the seat of honor. Tea is served and the pipe is offered by the Magistrate's attendants. I beg His Honor not to stand on ceremony, but to sip his tea; and we talk of good doctrine and good government, as friend to friend. . . .

To-day in the city and district of Bonnieburn, with its one million people, are a score of Christian chapels. Hundreds of bright boys and girls from Christian homes are in our schools. Some lads walk eighty miles over the mountains to study in the Academy at Yenping and go back to be preachers to their own people. The missionary who visits Bonnieburn now, as at the first, straightway loses his heart to these kind folk, who are open-hearted as ever, and proud of their heritage.

Away down the rushing burn and near the point where it meets the Min, is a busy river town. Just back of the town is a hill and on the hill a large, flat rock. The people of the town call it Prayer Rock; and this is the story they tell:—

When Mr. Sites visited this town, a year or two after his first entrance into the district, one man, of good family, believed the Message. He became a preacher. For years, while pastor of the church which grew up there, he would go every morning, in rain or cold or heat, to pray on this hill-top at sunrise for the spread of the gospel light through all these valleys. He grew old, but still trudged daily to his place of intercession. When he died they found his knees calloused with kneeling on the rock. His prayer is being answered; now on New Year's morning the Christians of the town meet at sunrise by the rock, where the old man used to pray, for a service of praise.

Lotus Flower Mountain, near the Upper M

XI

AMONG THE RAPIDS

EARLY one morning the little caravan approached Rock River. They were weary with the travel of the last two days, for they had crossed the high watershed from Bonnieburn, and were now looking for a down-river boat. Several boats lay moored in a cove safely sheltered from the rush of waters.

Stepping aboard one trim-looking craft—says the Journal—we found it just ready to put off.

"What is the native fare to Foochow?" I asked.

"Five dollars," replied the captain. "Here are four other passengers already on board; they all pay it; and you may go at the same rate if you choose."

"Good," said I, devoutly thankful for this opportune meeting. "We are short of money. May we pay part here and part when we arrive at home?"

"Oh, yes, as you please," answered our honest captain.

We were a hundred and eighty miles from home, requiring still five or six days' travel, and had only four dollars left to live on and pay our pas-

sage. For this twenty-four days' trip, covering three hundred and sixty miles, we started out with only ten dollars of money. We met friendly people everywhere and lacked nothing.

Our boat is half a hundred feet in length, with rounding mat-shed roof over the passengers' space amidships. Beneath the clean, white planks on which we sit by day and sleep by night there is a depth of four or five feet of hold for cargo. The deck, forward and aft, is full of boatmen. A mighty stern-oar, as long as the boat, is pivoted over the stern and so nicely poised that the captain on the after bridge swings it with ease. A guide-oar at the bow, nearly as long as the other, is wielded by a pilot specially engaged for the trip. He gets the extraordinary wage of ten dollars to take the boat through the worst series of rapids, thirty miles to the junction with the Min.

Our boat has put out into the stream and now we are in the rapids; the bed of the river is a field of boulders and jagged points of rocks. There is but one narrow channel where the boat can find open water.

I could not even guess the course, but the pilot and the captain know. Steersmen and oarsmen strain every nerve to catch the current which sweeps them safely past this hidden rock and then to swerve back just in time to escape that mighty boulder.

Now we approach a rapid where the current is too swift and the turns too sharp for ordinary steering. A long rope is fastened to the stern of

the boat and four men are put out on a great stone to hold back, while others on board ply the brakes. Thus slowly and carefully the boat is eased down among the rocks, while the angry waters rush by.

We pass a large boat wrecked in the rapids. It seems to have been going upstream, loaded with salt. Doubtless the main rope broke, and the boat drifted helplessly back to be smashed on a boulder.

Here we can see the toil of traffic upstream. We meet one boat which has thirty-four men tracking on the bank. Each man wears a soft rope sling over his shoulder, spliced to a short guy-rope of plaited bamboo. These guy-ropes are attached at intervals of a few feet to the bamboo cable which is fastened firmly to the boat. The bank just here is a beautiful coarse gravel, and the men pull, bending themselves over until they walk on all-fours, and thus, with all their strength, they drag the slow craft along.

I notice that some of the men hold a sharp-pointed stone in each hand to bite into the ground, like the teeth on the wheel of a traction engine. I wonder what invention a Yankee will one day substitute for this severe man-labor.

More than once that day, in the height of a thrilling struggle with waves and rocks, the missionary heard the captain adjure his men by all the gods to put forth every ounce of strength. Stamping on his bridge in a seeming frenzy, the captain would shout above the tumult of the waters:—

"Buy your coffins! Buy your coffins!

"You're dead! You're dead!"

This method of appeal had evidently produced happy results; but it was certainly violent and, from the Chinese point of view, profane. Could not the same ends be gained by more Christian means? The captain listened considerately to some gentle exhortation offered when the boat tied up for the night. But after the lights were out and most of the men were asleep, the old tar was heard muttering his reflections upon the advice given:—

"A lot these foreigners know about running a boat! 'Speak calmly,' indeed! Oh, yes! To-morrow, when we get into the fifteenth rapid, I will politely say: 'Gentlemen, will you now be kind enough to put aside your oars and get out your iron-shod poles and ward the boat from the rock on which we are just dashing?' Well, they'll be dead before I've said it! If I hadn't yelled 'Coffins!' we'd all have gone to the bottom long ago!"

He sighed and rolled over in dreamless sleep.

Safely sheltered from
the rush of waters.

The City of Lingering Peace.

XII

IN THE CITY OF LINGERING PEACE

ON a picturesque slope in the angle of two rivers, which meet to form the Min, stands the City of Lingering Peace. Whether peace was supposed to linger in coming or to linger having come, I do not know. Certainly the situation is restful enough. Looking down, from the hill-tops, which crown the city, one sees a straight-away stretch of five miles of blue water, first smooth, then dashing among rocks, all held in bounds by serried ranks of green hills. The highest of the promontories on either side is capped with a pagoda, browned and weather-beaten like the native rock and dedicated to the guardian genii of the city.

Americans might liken the basin of the Min to that of the Potomac. Tumultuous ranges of hills have tried to block the Min in its course and have left the record of strife in innumerable rapids and flood-washed gorges. But the Chinese, with their genius for adaptation, have in a measure overcome the difficulties of navigation by devising boats to run the rapids and carry a heavy commerce.

The commercial metropolis of the upper Min

is this city of Lingering Peace, or as the Chinese call it, Yenping, one hundred and fifty miles from the sea.

On his first visit to the city, en route down river after the tour through Bonnieburn, Mr. Sites remarked its commanding situation. By a happy providence his boat was tied up here Saturday and Sunday. "Yenping"—he writes—"is the official head of three populous prefectures, and boasts a proud literary aristocracy. Moreover, it is a strategic centre of commerce, and commands the line of coming railway development between Foochow and the Yangtze valley. For a foreign residence for a mission family, I like Yenping better than any other city I have seen west of Foochow. On a beautiful elevation I have looked the spot over for placing two missionary residences. I trust the Lord will open the way in due time."

To-day on that "beautiful elevation" within the wall, overlooking the city and the river vista, stand three mission houses; near by is the Nathan Sites Memorial Academy, where youths of that region, for one hundred miles about, are trained to Christian service. On another knoll stands the fine mission hospital; on still another the buildings of the women's and girls' schools. Down in the heart of the city is one of the largest churches in the province. How these and many other things came about, is wrapped up in a story or two which I must now tell.

One day nearly fifty years ago, a blind man named Dang, led by his little boy, passed along the great South Street, in Foochow, out of the city gate to the Tea Pavilion. Near the Tea Pavilion he caught strange sounds of singing from within a house. They went to the door and heard a man speaking to a crowd. The little boy led the blind man in "to see" what it all meant. He heard the gospel story—for the house was our "Church of the True God." The preacher, that day, was Teacher Sia. Next day the blind man came again; he got spiritual eyesight; not long after, a missionary doctor performed a skilful operation which gave him back his natural sight as well. A missionary got him a large-type Bible. He began to read it eagerly, for he was a man of some education; but he stumbled at the deeper meanings. About that time Teacher Sia became pastor of the East Street Church in Foochow City, near which Mr. Dang lived. Sia took peculiar interest in him, taught him, trained him, touched him; and the man once blind went out to lead others to the light.

Before losing his eyesight he had been in official employ in other parts of China. Becoming a preacher he was sent to Yenping because of his knowledge of the Mandarin colloquial as spoken there. For many years he served in that region with tact and zeal and great efficiency. It was a difficult field in which to get a foothold. Especially was this true of Yenping City. Here the population was dominated by two rather intractable

classes, the literary aristocracy and the river shipping interests.

Only a bare beginning seemed to have been made in the city when our traveler made his fourth visit to Yenping in 1869. Mr. Dang was pastor, but the little church had as yet practically no membership aside from the pastor's family. Out of six or eight " inquirers " only one candidate was judged worthy of baptism; he was—but this brings us to another story.

A peddler, Daing by name, had come from his home up-river, in Eternal Rest district, to ply his trade in the little metropolis. As it chanced, he lodged next door to the chapel. His landlady, being both Chinese and feminine, had, of course, early formed acquaintance with her neighbor, the preacher's wife, by chatting across the wall. Within a week or two the women had picked out a panel of the plastered partition. The landlady and her mother-in-law came often to prayers in the chapel with Mrs. Dang. Having heard the doctrine and judged it a good thing, they exhorted their lodger to go and hear. Being a man, and Chinese, he at first paid no attention to their chatter. But on the fourth Sunday he went, listened, was convinced, and for six months had not been absent a Sunday. Unfortunately the landlady herself fell away, and, with the other members of her family, became afraid of their new faith and ceased for some time to attend. But the lodger was steadfast. He worked diligently at his trade

on week-days, but regularly observed the Sabbath.

Two months ago—says the Journal—two or three of them were talking together one evening, when the pastor spoke of the judgment to come. Daing seemed to be deeply stirred. He told of the desolations wrought by the Taiping rebels—how, a few years before, they had invaded his village, killed his father and plundered his home,—but all this distress, he said, was naught to the great day of Judgment, for which he earnestly prayed he might be prepared. From that time a marked change was observable in him. I do not recollect having baptized a man of whom I could hope for more than from this man.

His after-history justified the hope. Mr. Daing soon began preaching, and for twenty years was a faithful missionary to his own people. His fruitful ministry was another link in the living chain of influence by which the divine call of a college student in America is bound up with the destinies of men unnumbered in China.

Ah, that is cold rhetoric. Let me tell you something from my heart. When Mr. Daing went back to his home among the hills in the joy of his new hope, the little woman who was waiting for him there soon found that the joy was for her too. Gladly and loyally she joined her husband in his new life of Christian service.

Ten years later it happened—or was it ordered so?—that Mr. Daing was pastor of the Church at Yenping, at the time of those events of which you

shall hear later, which lacked but little of making the last chapter of my story. And it was this brave little woman who then, with innate skill and Christian tenderness, washed my husband's wounds and tended him until they felt safe to move him to a rapids-boat and send him back to me.

Another ten years later, as her husband was going by river to a preaching appointment, his boat was wrecked on the rocks and he was lost in the foaming waters. So, meeting with Christian courage the duty of the common day, Mrs. Daing took up the work of a deaconess. Years afterward when I visited Yenping, I saw her, her face radiant with heavenly light, still active and abounding in the work of the Lord.

The Seven Golden Candlesticks.

Behind teacher Sia (at the left hand), Lee the blacksmith. At the right end, Ling Ging Ding, and behind him young deacon Yek. In the middle, the three brothers Hu.

XIII

SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

SUNDAY morning dawned bright on the Church of Heavenly Rest. Just over the wall was the great temple of the same name on which we had looked with wonder, our first day in Foochow. To-day the temple courts seemed empty, as indeed they were on most days except festival days. The church was early filled.

It was a high day in our Zion. To-day, with the laying on of hands, seven men, native Chinese, were to be solemnly set apart to the office and work of the ministry.

The occasion was the visit of Bishop Kingsley, in 1869. Up to this time all our Chinese preachers, like Wesley's early helpers, were "lay preachers." For ten years the gospel story had been heard more and more frequently from native lips. Chinese preachers had developed notable power in the extension of the Message. But the church at home bade them wait until their work should clearly approve itself as indeed of God, before granting them regular authority to preach and to administer the sacraments. Now seven of these whom we had called helpers had been recommended by the Mission and duly elected in Amer-

ica for ordination as deacons. Four of the seven were further to be ordained elders.

It was a day of holy triumph, the end of a probation period. These ministers of Christ had come of age. The time of beginnings was over. The church had been planted and tended; the season of first-fruits had come.

At the love-feast, with which the day began, the seven candidates were given seats of honor in front. It was a picture to be remembered. First came the two tall brothers Hu, of a high literary family, who had been among the earliest converts ten years before. They were the James and John of our new apostolic group; at least one was a Son of Thunder and the other most loving and beloved. Then there was the fiery islander, of whom you shall hear more anon, once a pirate, now a power for righteousness.

Sitting with quiet dignity in the group of elders-elect was Teacher Sia. It seemed worth the coming from America, just to see him there that day.

One of the three who were to be made deacons was another whom you know, the converted blacksmith. The youngest of them all was a fine fellow who had come up through the boys' boarding school and had often toured the hills with Mr. Sites; he to-day is the one survivor of that group, Yek Ing-guang.

The cakes and tiny cups of tea had been served. These take the place of bread and water at a love-feast in China. Then the testimonies began.

John the beloved was the first to speak.

"When I consider," he said, "that God has called me to preach His gospel, the thought overwhelms me. There was a time, some years ago, when I became vain, and fancied I was a good preacher; then came a grievous fall which humbled me in the dust, and with repentant tears I sought and found pardon. I have had something of the experience of Bunyan's Pilgrim; have fallen into the Slough of Despond; have stumbled on Mount Difficulty, have wrestled in mortal agony with Apollyon. Many temptations and trials have fettered me. But out of them all the Lord hath delivered me, and to-day I feel that I am His child. Blessed be His holy name!"

The blacksmith rose; but it was the messenger of God who spoke:

"Who is sufficient for these things? We must have the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It was this that inspired Paul, and made Peter eloquent. This filled Wesley with burning zeal, and it is this which makes our Bishop willing to meet the difficulties of crossing continents and oceans to proclaim the gospel to us. We must now take up the work. The missionaries have borne the cross to our shores. We, filled with the Spirit's power, must now take it up and carry it all over China."

The young knight of the cross said:

"My heart leaps for joy at what I have seen and heard. Christ has indeed begun to triumph in China. Five years ago Bishop Thomson came to see us and we all felt that a good work was begun. Now, Bishop Kingsley comes, and we see

that our progress is more rapid. We seven who are to be ordained to-day are merely the rough foundation stones in the church rising here in Foochow; and more highly polished stones will hereafter complete the edifice. A mighty work is before us, but our God is all-powerful. You remember how it was with the walls of Jericho. Many of the Israelites were afraid they could never take the city. But some trusted in God and made the attempt and on the last day, behold, the walls fell. I have faith in God that we are fully able to go up and possess the land."

Teacher Sia began:

"I would fain speak to-day of the deeper work of grace wrought in my heart during the early part of this year. For weeks my mind was clouded and my heart sorrowful on account of my sins. I did not tell any one of this peculiar burden which was resting on my heart. Finally, from the depths of this sorrow, I sought and found my Saviour. I saw Him face to face. I knew Him as I had never known Him before. I had known Him afar off but now He had come close to me. I talked to Him as to my familiar friend. I could have wished thousands of people assembled in the church, and I raised on a high platform in their midst that I might have told every one of the boundless grace and glory filling my soul." His right hand was upon his breast and his eyes up-raised with a rapt look as he ended: "Were the mountains pure gold they could not purchase my joy, nor the whole world my peace.

I plead with my brethren, get near to the Saviour, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Members of our sister mission, the American Board, participated in the ordination ceremony. The newly ordained Chinese ministers then took part in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was a sacred moment when, for the first time, our Chinese brethren presented to their Christian fellow countrymen the symbols of their faith.

Bishop Kingsley was profoundly impressed with the ripeness of Christian experience and knowledge which he found in these native ministers, and with the spirit of their testimonies and prayers. At his request the closing prayer of Sia Sek Ong at the final adjournment of this annual meeting was preserved, in substance. It seemed at the time, as we heard it, like a coronation hymn, ascribing glory to God for the conquests of those first years,—but it also spoke the humility and faith which, in him, were to win still richer triumphs for the cross in years to come:—

"We give thanks to Thee, O God our Heavenly Father, the everlasting Jehovah, that we, the lowest and most sinful of men, have seen these days and have been allowed to share in this business with the Bishop, the missionaries and the brethren at this Annual Meeting. For what our ears have heard, for what our eyes have seen, we are indebted to the free grace of God. We give thanks to Thee, O God, that the Holy Spirit has come

into our lives, increasing our wisdom, warming our hearts and greatly establishing our faith. Now we ask that the Holy Spirit may go with us to our work. The Bishop leaves us and we go east, west, south and north to all our circuits. Help us, day and night, to pray. Write upon our hearts, as rules for our guidance, the books we have here read, the business we have here discussed, the instructions we have here heard. Help us not to be lazy. Help us before or behind men to follow our consciences. Help us to be true and faithful; to watch the sheep in every place; and may we have the peace of God and be helped to benefit and save the people. If, during the year, we meet trouble, persecution, temptation, help us to conquer. If one or two of us must leave the world before we meet again—we do not know, God knows—help us to bear the cross even unto death and glorify God in all our lives. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abide with us. This is our hearts' desire."

THE TREBLE NOTE

"Love took up the harp of life
And struck on all its chords with might,
Struck the chord of self, which, trembling,
Passed in music out of sight."

TENNYSON.

Ku-shan,—Entrance to Monastery Grounds.

XIV

AT THE TEMPLE OF ETERNAL SPRING

ONE day in the early seventies, a foreigner was footing it up the valley road, having just left the City of Eternal Spring. The region is very idolatrous, and its numerous large temples are kept in excellent repair.

Among the temples was one which was then especially popular as the temporary abode of the deity who presides over the fortunes of women. It was the season of the annual festival of this god. My heart was deeply stirred—so runs the Journal—on seeing great numbers of women, usually in companies of ten or twelve, on their way to and from this shrine. Their hair was carefully arranged and gorgeously bedecked with flowers and many fancy pins and combs. They were dressed in bright colors. Those who were returning carried in their hands fragrant incense sticks and sachets of sacred ashes of "things offered to idols," thus bearing to their homes some virtue from the god. Those at the temple were lighting their candles, burning incense and bowing down to the idol, which was one borrowed especially for this occasion, from a distant temple of great fame. So intent and earnest were they in their

worship that they were not diverted from it, even by the unusual aspect of a foreigner and the crowds of men attracted by his presence. One woman, with earnest, motherly face, after making her offerings and prostrations before the idol, turned to me, bought two tracts and the Gospel of Matthew, and walked away. If one god should fail her, perhaps another would help!

Whereupon the traveler puts up a prayer that the day might soon come when the Lord would turn unto Himself the hearts of this people, and when these intelligent-looking women should be seen flocking to and from the house of God.

Straightway he proceeds to help answer his own prayer. It had not been my purpose—the Journal continues—to rent a chapel in this city. I had turned aside, saying, "This territory surely belongs to Amoy. But can I leave it thus? No chapel, no preacher, no one to offer books, here where tens of thousands of people are given wholly to idolatry!"

I retraced my steps, feeling this must not be. In two or three hours I had succeeded in securing a very suitable house for a chapel. I went on my way, leaving Mr. Song there to preach Christ.

I am again in the City of Eternal Spring—says the Journal a few years later. Twelve women take part in our Sabbath service. Nine of them partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; six of them came three miles on foot to attend this meeting. Those very same women who were wont to prostrate themselves before the idols, of-

On the Road to the City of Eternal Spring.
A Mandarin's Grave.

Festival Styles at the
Temple of Eternal Spring.

fering incense and prayers, are now devoutly saying, " I believe in God and in Jesus Christ His Son."

At Chinese New-Year time, these Christian women went among the worshippers again at the big temple, and with pleading words besought them to leave such vain worship, and hear of the loving Saviour and a home in Heaven. They would read a hymn, or the words of Jesus from their Bible, while the heathen women gathered around them, questioning if they really could read, or was it just make-believe? Some of the idol-worshipping women were so interested that they invited the Christian women to come and visit them in their homes. They went; in one place a class of inquirers was formed, of whom three men and three women are now baptized and others are learners. Thus through the love and labor of these women, the sound of prayer and praise to God is now heard where recently were known only discord, idolatry and superstition.

How had it come about?

The visit to the women's temple had been only an incident in an unusually long itinerary, a swing around a larger circle than the basin of the Min. To the south of the Min valley and near the sea, stretches the magnificent plain of Hinghua, just on the verge of the tropics, yielding three crops a year and supporting a dense population. Here Mr. Sites had pioneered the work some years before. He loved the people and had been impressed with their intelligence. He had repeatedly

visited the Hinghua district; but this time, starting from Hinghua city as a base, he had pushed westward, from the broad valleys into the unexplored foothills of the adjacent prefecture of Eternal Spring. Thence crossing high ridges, several days' journey to the upper branches of the Min, he returned by boat down the rapids after an absence of nearly seven weeks. On the boat he records his prayers and plans for developing women's work for women in Hinghua City as a centre of the southern field.

Letters received at Foochow in his absence told of the zeal of women in the homeland to aid in such work. We consulted and took steps to make the ideal a reality.

A few weeks after, Mr. Sites was again in Hinghua City, in the home of Elder Hu, our Son of Thunder.

"Do you not think," said the missionary to the Elder that evening, "that our Church in China should have the help of trained women to go out and teach the Bible to their sisters, as deaconesses do in America?"

"Impossible!" replied the Elder. "The customs of our country would not allow women to go away from their homes as teachers. They would be insulted, and bring disgrace upon the Church."

"But even in China," urged the other, "the wives of our preachers are a recognized power in the work of the Church. Christian women in America are feeling very keenly the needs of their

untaught Chinese sisters and have offered to aid us in training Bible-women."

"If you have the money to spend on such a foolish project, go ahead and spend it," said the Elder. "I predict that no good will come of it."

"Well, old friend, we will go ahead as you say," was the answer. "We shall open a school right here, and you are to superintend it; and your good wife, with her Christian endowment, her genteel manner and her knowledge of Chinese proprieties, can give the women motherly advice and daily oversight."

The missionary explained the plan: to invite eight or ten of the brightest and best-recommended women of the district to come together in a school at the city chapel for a course of Bible study in preparation for deaconess work; arrangements had already been made for the equipment and a teacher had been secured. Then they knelt and prayed together and Brother Hu, like the rest of us, meekly accepted the God-given task.

From the very first, the interest and enthusiasm of the women-students, the superintendent and the matron were beautiful to see and insured success. The results were rich beyond our hopes; the women developed in all Christian graces. Three months later at the Sunday morning love-feast, two of them had been appointed to pass the cakes and tea to the women of the congregation, seated on one side of the chapel. They took the trays and in a quiet, grave and most accept-

able way fulfilled the office. In the testimony-meeting which followed, nearly every one of these newly trained deaconesses testified to having received strength and power and joy in the Holy Ghost.

The following year I went with Mr. Sites to attend a meeting in Hinghua, and, on my part, especially to see these women. As we sat in front of them and looked into their bright faces our hearts were inspired with new hope for the elevation and salvation of our Chinese sisters. There were students, teachers, deaconesses and Christian mothers. Before the days of our meeting closed we seemed to see a new era. The Holy Spirit was manifestly present in our services. One young woman was on the programme Sunday afternoon for a fifteen-minute address, but at the end of forty minutes only did she stop.

"It was very good, my dear," I said, "but why did you speak so long?"

"Because," she explained, "so many heathen men and women came in who never had heard before; I could not stop when they were giving such good attention; I forgot everything except that I had a message for them."

And not a moment of weariness had any one felt when she finished. Already the little school had become well known and its aid was greatly prized; pastors and people commended its great usefulness and expressed their appreciation of the help rendered to the Church by these trained women.

One of the members of that first class was a woman not over twenty-five years of age, who had recently lost her husband. I did not learn her story until some years after. It probably does not differ much, on its darker side, from the story of hundreds of thousands of women in China. The light which came into her life, however, made her story so bright a memory to me that I will let her tell it to you.

XV

A SONG OF DELIVERANCE

"I HAVE no memory of my parents. They both died when I was about three years old. I was then taken by an old woman, with whom I lived very unhappily until I was twelve, when she betrothed me to a young man belonging to a family who were friends of hers. I was married when I was fifteen and then thought I was going to be happy the rest of my life. My husband was a Buddhist and was a very strict vegetarian. He urged the Buddhist doctrines upon me. He went to the Buddhist monastery on Drum Mountain, intending, after a time, to have his head shaved and become a priest and nevermore recognize any family relations. He remained there three months and then came back home to collect some money. It was near the end of the year, when all accounts must be settled or cancelled. There was a great freshet at the time, and on his way home he fell into a swollen stream and came near losing his life. Finally he reached home in a miserable plight and crosser than ever, declaring that the accident was caused by the gods, because of my unwillingness to become a Buddhist with him.

"With us Chinese the great feast of the year, you know, is on the last night of the old year and the first day of the new. So we prepared our feast for the last night of the year. As soon as he was seated at the table my husband insisted that his cabbage had the smell of meat. I said it had not, and he became so enraged that we had another pitched battle. I shall always remember the close of that year"—this with a rippling laugh—"for it was the last that closed with us in such darkness.

"During the first month of that new year I was one day standing by my window when I heard a man's voice out on the street. You know our windows are only small openings in the wall with a wooden door to close them. I dared not go out; but I could hear the man talking earnestly in the midst of a crowd. As I listened I thought, 'What strange words! How different from anything I ever heard before!' I cannot now remember what he said, only afterward, there kept ringing in my mind, 'After death, the souls of the good ascend to Heaven and the souls of the bad go down to dwell with the evil spirits.' A few days afterwards I heard another voice preaching the same doctrine. I called my husband to come and listen too, but he refused and scolded me instead; he made me close the window, saying I was ready to listen to a strange man but would give no heed to the doctrine he had tried to teach me. I answered, 'This man is telling how to be good; you never taught me how to be good.' However,

I determined to find out more, and on inquiring of a neighbor I learned that the preacher had a wife and family and lived in a street very near our own house.

"I improved the first opportunity to visit the preacher's wife, who told me about God and Heaven and the Sabbath day, and urged me to be patient with my husband and induce him to come and hear. Accordingly, after that, when he was cross I did not answer back; I used every strategy to bring him to hear the 'Jesus preacher.' It happened one day as he was passing along the street, that he heard the preaching going on in a house, so he went nearer and listened. The preacher presented him with a book—the Gospel of St. John. He brought it home, told me where he got it, and threw it down. As he sat down to dinner he said, 'That man you heard preaching first, on the street, was a foreigner. They were all talking about him and telling how he loves our Chinese people. They call him Teacher Sites.'

"My husband could read well, but I did not then know a character. In the evening I asked him to read the book, but he would not. Time after time I coaxed him to read and read aloud, so as to share it with me. Sometimes he would read a little while, then angrily throw the book down, saying, 'I taught you doctrine years ago and you would not believe. Why do you want this?' I would answer, 'But this doctrine teaches people to be good and it agrees with my heart!' I did want to hear it so much that I would take up the

The "Outlook" of the Non-Christian Bride in Hinghua.

Woman's Sphere.

book and turn over the leaves and say to him, ' Oh, what is this? What does it say on this page? Just read a little along here.' Gradually he began to read more freely, and went again to hear the preacher. One day when I was at the preacher's house I requested him to persuade my husband to come to the Sunday service and to allow me to come too. Not long after this my husband said, ' To-morrow is the rest-day, and I'm going to the chapel to see the Jesus worship, and they said I should bring you too.' So on Sunday morning I followed my husband down to the chapel with a joyful heart. When the people knelt to pray, I knelt too, but my husband stood and looked on.

" After attending three Sundays my husband was willing to kneel in time of prayer. This was in the third month and then we subscribed ourselves as learners, and became sincere seekers after the truth. He studied the Bible with the preacher and at home. In the next year, Teacher Sites came again and baptized my husband, my little boy and myself. Ah, those were happy days! I was learning to read and was glad all day long.

" Soon my husband was asked to help the preacher, and in this work he labored faithfully until the time of his death, last year, in the third month. When he was dying, I was on my knees by his bedside, praying, ' Lord Jesus, receive his spirit! ' He said, ' Amen,' and ceased to breathe so peacefully, just like a child falling asleep in its mother's arms.

"But then there came upon me a cloud, darkness and great sorrow. For three days and nights I neither ate nor slept. I seemed almost to be losing my mind, but I kept praying all the time and at the end of the third day, while praying, I seemed to see into Heaven with all its beauties and to hear my husband's voice saying to me, 'Follow the Saviour and this is your home.' I then became so happy I rejoiced all the time. My friends reproved me for being so joyful when I ought to be mourning; but I was so happy I could not be sorrowful, and ever since I have been joyously following the Saviour and looking forward to that Heavenly home."

XVI

THE GIRLS' DRILL GROUND

ONCE, in the college days at Delaware, some good women of the city, so the story runs, determined to close out a liquor saloon which had been opened by an Irishman not far from the campus. They went in a body, and some of the students also went to see what would happen. The ladies smashed many bottles and broke open some kegs; but one large and wicked-looking barrel defied their best strength. A student standing by, our Nathan, seized an axe and drove in the barrel-head, and was fined twenty-five dollars next day for destroying private property.

The good works of good women, not only in his college days but on the mission field, appealed strongly to the sympathy of Nathan Sites.

In this, his spirit was only typical of the spirit of co-operation which has prevailed from the beginning between mission boards and women's societies.

When, in 1846, Rev. J. A. Collins wrote to his Mission Board of his convictions and missionary call and his great desire to be sent to China, they replied that they had no money to organize a mission in China. Then he wrote:

"Engage me a passage before the mast; my own strong arms can pull me to China and support me when there."

Such earnestness was not to be resisted. He was sent. But the event had stirred the whole Church, and one of the effects was the organization of the "Woman's China Missionary Society of Baltimore," which thereafter worked and prayed especially for China. This society sent annually to the Mission Board a contribution of three or four hundred dollars. Some years later, however, they heard a pathetic appeal from Dr. Wentworth, of the Foochow mission. He pleaded for funds for the erection of a girls' school.

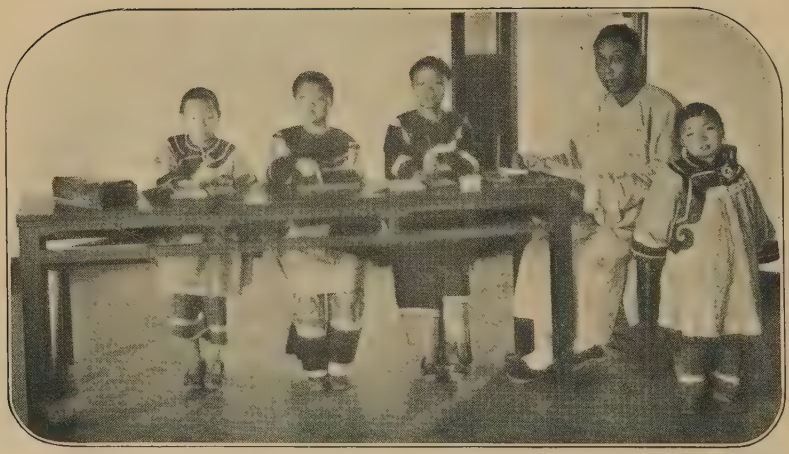
"Our preaching, because of native customs, has to be to men," he said, "and only now and then does a woman dare venture within the sound of the gospel."

The Baltimore ladies responded at once and resolved to raise within the year two thousand five hundred dollars for the erection of a school building, and later to assume the support of the school. Soon after this two sisters, the Misses Woolston, were sent out to superintend the new enterprise for teaching girls in Foochow.

After ten years of service, in 1868, the Misses Woolston went home on furlough, and for three years the conduct of the school devolved upon me. This brought the girls' school work more especially into the range of Mr. Sites' active interest, and he gave it his best thought.

In this, as in all his mission work, he made it

Where East and West Meet.



Crooning the Classics.

his care to keep in touch with the feelings of the Chinese and especially to know what the preachers were thinking. He advised me first to invite all the preachers to the annual closing exercises. Great were their wonder and delight to see the girls point out on wall maps the various nations of the strange barbarian world.

The preachers were pleased, and full of praise for the work of the Misses Woolston. These devoted ladies had opened their school with one little girl; after two weeks six more came, of whom four were soon taken home again. It was the very beginning, and they had to convince China that it was worth while to teach their girls. But now after ten years of development, the preachers' ideals had outrun those of their teachers. Geography and numbers and the Bible in the colloquial —yes, so far so good. But something was wanting. Their girls must study the language of their classics!

Now this, from the orthodox Chinese point of view, was rank heresy. The opinion of Confucius in regard to women seems to have been generally accepted and held by the Chinese people. He said:—

"Women are human beings, but they are of a lower state than men and can never attain to equality with them."

A book written by a distinguished scholar of the last century is called "The Female Instructor." It declares the only necessary thing in the education of woman is her training in conduct, and

from first to last the thought throughout is obedience and entire subjection of woman to her male relatives. One of the earliest books on the subject of woman's education was by Lady Tsao, and the important features which she emphasizes may be judged by such chapter headings as, "The duties of a woman to her husband," "The unlimited respect due to a husband," "The obedience due to a husband and to his parents." Such famous books of instruction as, "Classics for Women" and "Records of Illustrious Women of Ancient Times" wielded no influence on the lives of those to whom they were addressed, largely, doubtless, because women were unable to read.

But now, by the transforming power of the gospel, by thinking on high things, Christian parents, and especially preachers, had begun to glimpse the glory of enlightened womanhood.

Mr. Sites soon secured from Hongkong a set of Chinese classical readers suitable for use in a girls' school. A good scholarly teacher was engaged and the girls began to get that grounding in Chinese scholarship which was needed to make them fit to be teachers in their turn.

When the two sisters returned to take up the work, Mr. Sites strongly urged upon them the importance of making the school a vital interest of the growing native church. He suggested the appointment of visiting and examining committees from the annual meeting of preachers, looking forward to a time when the Chinese church

should assume the expense and management of the entire school.

One of the little girls who was early in the school, a member of a noble Christian family, is now a beloved physician in Foochow City. Another graduate from the same home is one of the principals of the splendidly equipped Boarding School of to-day. These are but two from the scores who have gone out into special service. And all over the province thousands of love-lit homes bespeak the blessing that has followed the prayers and pains of half a century ago.

XVII

HIGH FINANCE

ONE of the graduates of the Boarding School, the first year we had it, was a sweet girl named Bright-light. She lived in Teacher Sia's home village, on the mountain, back of Oxvale. A number of families in the village had become Christians since Teacher Sia had been baptized. Bright-light's father and uncle were members of the little village church. We had impressed upon her that much had been done for her, that she now was prepared for service and that she must teach others as she herself had been taught. She said she would be happy to teach a day-school of the little girls of her village if they could be induced to come: but there seemed little prospect of our being able to finance a school there, even if we could find pupils willing to attend.

About that time I received a letter from one of the secretaries in New York of the newly organized Woman's Foreign Mission Society, inclosing a draft for one hundred dollars, and urging that we apply it to some special work for women and girls. Was not this the chance for an experiment hitherto untried, a village day-school for girls? Here was the money and here the teacher.

The floating population of a Chinese village.

Mr. Sites and I talked with her father and tried to make plans, but he was confident that there would be no use in attempting a school for girls, as there were no children who would or could attend. The heathen families would not permit their children to come and the Christians had no little girls who could be spared.

"Why," I said, "your brother has two girls, seven and eight years old; and there are the Wongs and the Diongs and the Lees."

"Oh, they all work," he said. "The eight-year-old carries her baby brother on her back all day that her mother may work in the fields."

"Now, Church-uncle," I said, "I want you to go through the village and tell at every house about this proposed school for little girls. Tell them that you will give your reception hall for a schoolroom, that the missionary will furnish the books and pay the teacher, and that each child need bring only a table and a small bamboo chair."

He went away to his village home, twelve miles up the mountain-side. Within a week he was back again. He had done as I said, but he insisted there could be no school. All the little girls had to work and none could be spared. One tiny tot I mentioned who surely need not work! Oh, yes, she had to watch a flock of ducks and with her long bamboo rod keep them near the brook and safely away from the neighbor's garden. Another family had a few cattle, and if their seven-year-old little girl did not keep them graz-

ing on the hillside they would break into a neighbor's field and eat and trample the growing crops and then there would be a village quarrel.

After many ingenious and plausible excuses had been brought forward, he finally suggested that if I gave the scholars one meal a day it might be an inducement; but I could not manage that. There were more journeyings up and down the mountain-side, many prayers and much palaver. At last I said:—

"If you can get a school of twenty little girls between six and thirteen years old and have the teacher keep an accurate record of daily attendance, I will give each child ten cash [that is, one cent] a day, and I will come often to hear them recite."

He went home with this new proposition, and directly the ardor for school became contagious. Soon glowing reports came to me; eighteen little girls were promised, and the school commenced. A few weeks later I was on my way up the mountain-side, eager to see for myself the new venture. I found twenty little girls each seated at her table, her book open before her, reading at the top of her voice in the customary Chinese style. As I heard them recite, one after another, I was amazed at the rapidity and exactness they had acquired. They were using the usual beginners' Three Character Classic—a Christian book—and also a Girls' Three Character Classic, a native or heathen book which I had made over, expurgating all the sentences which were objectionable. The

Young China. We are coming your way.

Hymnal, the Catechism, and the Gospels were added as the months went by. The children made such commendable progress that, except for the principle involved, I did not much regret having to carry up the basket of cash every month.

The dignified little teacher was a success. She was bright and also tactful, and her pupils were well trained both in their books and in good manners. Being a Christian she led her little flock to the chapel to the church service and to Sunday-school each week.

This was the very first day school for girls supported by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and I was proud of its success and influence. Within a few years villages on every hand were asking for girls' day schools, even faster than the Boarding School could turn out students prepared to teach, and no reward was asked or expected for attendance.

To-day in the hill villages of Bonnieburn and the wild cities by the sea, thousands of sweet girl voices are crooning the classics, and hundreds are thronging into our boarding schools, to become the cultured Christian teachers and mothers of to-morrow.

XVIII

GROUND-BREAKING

LAST fall a novel event in college history occurred on a commanding hillside outside the city of Foochow. College functions are likely to follow beaten paths; but this was different.

It was a quiet early morning ceremonial. A group of merry girls, each with a carrying-pole over her shoulder gaily decked in college colors, and wicker baskets hanging from the pole in true coolie fashion, entered the inclosure that is to be their campus, and with happy earnestness, carried away the first spadefuls of earth from the spot where is to stand the Woman's College of South China. Their eager enthusiasm, as they worked, rang true to the spirit of college girls who do things all round the world.

In half an hour they went quietly back to their lessons, at the preparatory school down under the hill. But the stroke of the spades upon the hillside stones had sounded out a message of hope for the girls clustered in schoolrooms all over the province,—in Clearwater and Oldfield, and Yenping above the rapids, and away in the mountain fastnesses beyond Hinghua. It seemed to usher

in the hour when all that the college world has done to make life rich and beautiful for the women of the West shall be shared by their sisters in China.

Just at the dawn of China's day of freedom, there in the sight of a great company of Christians, the cornerstone of the new college was laid. It was like a glorious promise from the Church of Christ to the China that is to be—the promise of a womanhood noble and lovely beyond her dreams.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

"It is people that count. You want to put yourself into people; they touch other people; these, others still, and so you go on working forever."

ALICE FREEMAN PALMER.

XIX

A BUCCANEER APOSTLE

ON a Monday morning two missionaries came down to the beach of a little harbor on the Hokchiang coast and boarded a fishing-smack to go over to the Island of the Southern Sun. No foreigner had ever visited this island—at least not with intent. If any luckless mariner from the West may have been thrown upon its shores by stress of weather, he rued the day. Like many another primitive community on that barren coast, the people of Nan-nik make good the lack of their fisheries by piracy. In this they showed their kinship to communities on barren coasts in more than one Christian land.

But on this day the fishing-smack was waiting expressly to carry these two foreigners to the island as guests. There was a balmy breeze, but the captain advised delay; he knew the breeze was freshening into a nor-easter. The missionaries were Americans and, having set out, argued for going on. The captain was a Christian and he yielded.

Our hope—says the Journal—was to make the twenty-seven miles across before darkness settled

upon us. First, we crossed a beautiful inlet of the sea, sailing smoothly before the wind for about ten miles; we enjoyed it and thought we were fine sailors. The bay flows out through a passage where stands an immense pile of rocks in the middle, serving as a waymark for seamen. Now, we enter the open sea, and far ahead we sight islands which, we are told, are half-way across to our desired haven. The wind grows stronger, the waves higher; whitecaps are flying, and our boat is skipping over them or ploughing through the next big wave. I saw and felt that we were in danger but I trusted in the Lord. The captain called out, "Reef topsail!" and down it came three or four feet. Dr. Maclay had gone below. He had expressed the hope that our journey across might all be as smooth as the ten-mile bay at the beginning; I had wished for something more lively and now we were having it!

As the boat continued its fantastic dance, I remembered that I had in my valise a queer rubber vest, a life preserver, with tube and screw and all necessary attachments, which my dear wife had reinforced with straps and tape for just such an emergency as this. I went down to get it, and found Dr. Maclay wishing he had not come. He asked:—

"Well, how do you like this sailing?"

I blew up my queer vest until it was so distended I hardly knew myself, and replied:—

"Oh, this suits me well."

I returned to the deck to see and to wonder as

the waves tossed our little craft higher and higher. Again the order was heard, "Reef sail!"

The half-way islands draw nearer; we pass them, flying at great speed, and in the dim distance we see the hills on our desired island. The wind freshens, the heavens look foreboding as if to envelop us in darkness, but on we drive. The captain calls to us:—

"All's well! Wind and waves just right! The Lord is about us, to protect us."

Surely we are favored to sail under such a crew. It is past four o'clock. The misty heavens look grandly gloomy. On we go. It is September and the afternoons are long. Now, we are off the northwest end of our island, and sheltered. It is quite dark as we come to anchor in the surf breaking over a soft, sandy bottom. Two of our big boatmen come wading alongside of the boat, and turning their broad shoulders, invite us to mount and be carried to dry land. Christians from the village had been on the lookout but scarcely expecting us; now they came running with their lanterns to lead us along the narrow, uncertain path to the chapel.

From this island, a few years before, had fared forth one of the toughest of the pirate band, bound for Foochow to see the world. One day as he was strolling about the crowded thoroughfare of that flourishing metropolis, he heard preaching in a street chapel. He walked directly up in front of the speaker and listened intently. He asked questions about what was said, and at first seemed

eager to argue. The preacher was Chinese; but a new missionary, by name Binkley, was nominally in charge. He had not yet learned to speak the language, but he was so impressed by the earnest manner of this vagrant listener, that he invited him, after the meeting, to walk over the hill, home with him, where older missionaries could tell him more of this "Jesus doctrine."

I can never forget my questioning surprise on suddenly seeing this apparition,—so rough and untidy,—as he that day followed Mr. Binkley into our study, while at the same time my husband arose and approached him with a kindly greeting and a smile of welcome.

He was ready to admit that by profession he was a necromancer and teacher of boxing. More, he was an opium fiend; that was written on his face and hands! Mr. Sites reached for his Chinese New Testament and found that the man could read. We put him under Christian instruction. He seemed to apprehend and eagerly apply these new truths. Having decided that he must be a Christian, his first step was to give up the use of opium. This was a struggle almost to the point of despair. But, by unceasing prayer, daily encouragement, nourishing food and helpful surroundings, after a few weeks his victory was complete. Later he was placed under the care of a missionary, where he was taught and trained faithfully and successfully. Thus began the Christian life and work of one who became a veritable Peter. When Christian light had taken

possession of him, he wanted to do nothing but study the Bible, pray, sing and talk of his new-found religion. He committed to memory everything that he read, and in a few months could repeat more Scripture than most church members in Christian lands.

Within two years after he had first heard the gospel, he was given "exhorter's license," and allowed to go back to his native piratical island, that he might carry the Christ message to his own home and kindred and people. His two sons he sent at once to our Foochow Boys' School. His wife, sons and daughters all became Christians. Soon a great interest awakened under his preaching. He had remarkable power in winning people from their heathen gods; hundreds were received into the church on probation. His zeal and his very love for the brethren sometimes outran his discretion and brought upon him imprisonment and cruel beatings from Chinese officials. He welcomed the blessing of those "who are persecuted for righteousness' sake," having "endured trials of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment." I remember seeing him once, when we had secured his release from prison. He was brought from Hinghua to Foochow, all bruised with stripes, and cut with thongs and looking scarcely alive. But in it all, he could say:—

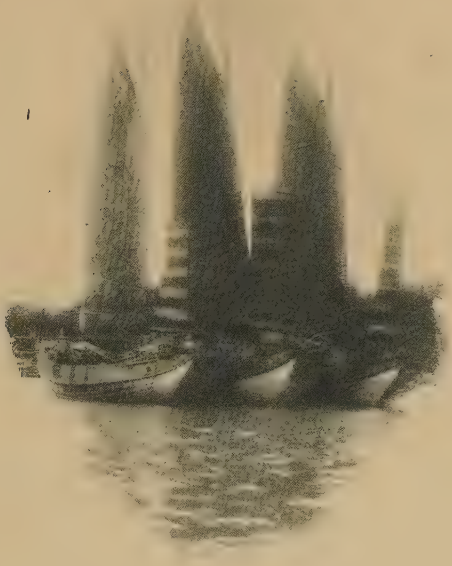
"None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may testify to the gospel of the grace of God."

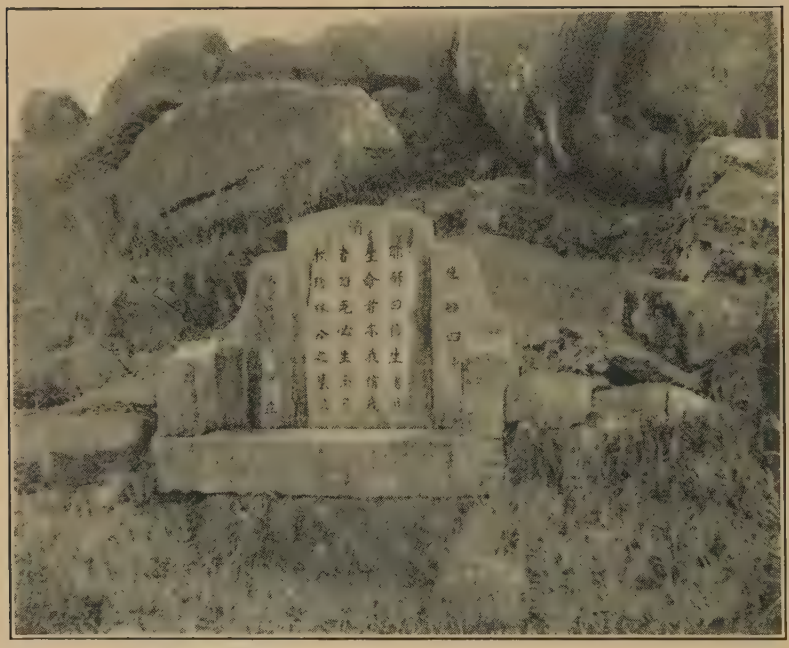
Immediately upon his recovery he was again in the work; reports reached us from the island of his convincing eloquence. Up to this time the wonderful spread of the gospel in that island had been wholly without the help of any missionary; the good man had worked single-handed. Dr. Maclay and Mr. Sites now felt they must visit Mr. Ling and learn more definitely the nature of the work he was doing. And thus it came about that they started across the stormy channel on that Monday morning.

Now we were here—continues the Diary—at last, and good Brother Ling was among the first to meet and greet us. As we entered the yard, his little daughter clasped my hand in both of hers, and led us into the chapel, while welcomes and greetings were shouted on all sides.

It seemed worth coming across not merely a stormy strait but an ocean, to stand in the midst of that island and to see what God had wrought through the pirate of other days. The chapel was thronged. We spoke in the Foochow dialect, and Mr. Ling interpreted. When he closed with an earnest, pleading prayer, the Holy Spirit was so present, enlightening us, that I could understand nearly all he said.

Dr. Maclay, writing of this island, a year or two later, said: "Nan-nik is a sort of Galilee from which the Lord is calling the fishermen to go, and henceforth catch men." Out of this barren island and home of piracy came many men who were taught and then sent to preach to the teeming pop-





Among the black rocks, on a quiet hillside,
near the church he last served.

ulation on the mainland of Hinghua. The dialect being different from that of Foochow, this source of supply seemed a special providence for the development of that fruitful field. Of the hundreds brought into the Church through the ministry of Ling Cing Ding, no less than twenty became in turn ministers of the gospel.

This man, as you know, was one of our Seven first ordained to the ministry. For sixteen years Elder Ling rendered heroic service. His last appointment was to a church up among the hills on the mainland. He was then just recovering from a severe illness at his island home. He said to his son:—

"I know I am not yet strong, and I think I may never get well, but I must go to my work. I should not die happy away from my post!"

He came over and reached his appointment only to die; he was buried among the black rocks on a quiet hillside near the church he last served.

The young man who led the pirate-inquirer into our study on that day of destiny was able to stay hardly more than a year in China. He never really mastered the language. He never preached an "Annual Sermon." But if his crown in heaven has only one star, that star is a galaxy!

XX

COMRADES OF THE CROSS

IN China as in Judea, a time of triumph for the Church is likely to be followed by a time of trial. Not long after our seven deacons had been ordained to the work of the ministry, a great persecution arose; and though none of our seven suffered martyrdom, they all endured hardness. Persecutions, like the poor, are always present in the planting of the Church. Even now, the believer has times of trial; but those were the times that tried men's souls, not singly but in wide communities.

In 1870 and 1871 all China was in ferment over the foreigner and his strange teaching. Far inland where the one had not been seen nor the other heard, rumor made both monstrous beyond words. Women shuddered and men gathered in mobs. The massacre of the French nuns at Tientsin and the famous placards at Canton were only the extreme expression of a general craze.

In Fukien, wherever the Church had been established, native Christians were the objects of threats or violence. To the native pastors it was a time of testing and tempering. In many instances it brought out the true hero. A typical experience was that of our friend Elder Sia.

At Hokchiang City, where he was in charge, there had been considerable excitement for some weeks. Elder Sia was unremitting in his efforts to protect the Christians. Night and day he was engaged in hearing complaints, giving advice, administering consolation, writing letters to distant points on his district, or going in person to the scene of some recent outrage to give assistance to the persecuted Christians. These efforts had been so successful, he began to hope that the church in the city would not be molested. Early one morning, however, he was informed by a friend that a plot had been laid, to attack the Christians and tear down the chapel that day. During the previous night, inflammatory placards had been posted throughout the city. The danger was so imminent, and had been sprung again so suddenly that the Christians were utterly confounded. Sia saw the grave character of the emergency and determined to do all in his power to avert the danger. The brethren soon caught his resolute spirit, and after a brief season of consultation and prayer, they laid their plans.

First, they applied for protection to the constable of the ward. He said:—

"There is no one to assist me. What can I do against the whole city?"

Then they applied to the owner of the premises they occupied as a chapel, a man of considerable influence in the city. He declined to help them, assigning reasons similar to those offered by the constable. Disappointed and almost disheartened,

some of the brethren were now disposed to give up in despair. Again Sia rallied them, saying:—

"Men may forsake us, but God can deliver; let us pray."

All engaged in earnest prayer to God for guidance. When they arose from their knees, Sia said:—

"Brethren, let us appeal directly to the government."

He addressed a petition to the magistrate, and, accompanied by some of the brethren, took it straight to the magistrate's palace. It happened that the magistrate was absent, but the deputy in charge received the paper, and on reading its contents, seemed immediately to appreciate the justness of the appeal. Instead of delaying for his superior's return, he approved the petition at once, and issued orders to meet the emergency. Calling for the constable of the ward, he ordered him to go through the streets of the city and warn the people against committing any acts of violence. He also sent a guard of soldiers to take charge of the chapel. All the Christians felt that God had heard their prayers and had sent them deliverance. No further threats were made, nor was a finger lifted against the chapel.

Coming up to the Annual Meeting that year, the preachers showed deep emotion in greeting one another, and again and again sang, "And are we yet alive?" Many of them had been in extreme peril. Some of them had been shamefully abused.

One was beaten, partly stripped of his clothing, and thrown over a precipice, where he was left to die. When he recovered consciousness he crept on his hands and knees along a narrow path, in a gully, until he reached a chapel in the next village.

One who had been compelled by circumstances to play a brilliant part in this drama of distress was young Deacon Yek, the youngest of the Seven, and one of Mr. Sites' helpers on pioneer tours. Since his ordination he had been pastor of a chapel on a far frontier. There lies before me as I write, a rough transcript of his words at the love-feast that year, as taken down by one who loved him as a son and rejoiced in his valiant record. He said:—

"I am delighted to be here. My charge is one hundred and forty miles from this place. During the year we have had sore trials. The enemy came upon us like a lion, but the Lord delivered us. We have heard of your troubles too and we have prayed for you. We have all been kept from fatal injury. Here we are to-day, joyful in the house of our God. Let us praise Him. Our trials have done us good; they have been beneficial to our cause. By them the truth has been spread everywhere, and many difficulties have been removed. Hundreds have been brought to hear something of the name of Jesus and of the Jesus religion. The rich and the poor, rulers and people, all have been led to ask, 'What is this commotion about?' In the mountain hamlet, in the crowded

city, on every hilltop and through every valley, people have heard of Jesus' name.

"Heretofore difficulties met us at every step. The worship of village idols, sacrifices to ancestors and the untold superstitions of the people have made it impossible to get the religion of Jesus before their minds. These many difficulties which we have had to meet may well be compared to the many hard knots and joints in the bamboo. It is hard to split. You get past one joint, then comes another and another and you are almost baffled in the attempt to get through it. But now God has, with one stroke, cleft the bamboo from top to bottom. When milder agencies fail, God sends abroad the thunder of His power. He strikes terror into the hearts of all, cuts through obstacles, and sweeps away the refuges of lies. He breaks every yoke, snaps every chain, and bids the oppressed go free. But, alas, alas, my brethren, there is one aspect of this subject that fills me with inexpressible sorrow. When God thus wonderfully helps His cause, I see a disposition, even among Christians, to give the glory to man, rather than to God to whom it belongs. They praise the human agent and forget Him who hath done it all. I feel like kneeling down right here and praying God to save us from this sin."

At this point the heroic young preacher's feelings overcame him and he sat down, while almost the entire audience was in tears.

XXI

COMMISSARIAT

THE Church was now in a measure self-administered: it had a few regularly ordained native pastors. Would it also now begin to be self-sustaining? Would these pastors, when appointed to definite congregations, look to them for financial support?

"The more rapidly you approach self-support," Bishop Kingsley had said to the preachers, "the more rapidly people will be converted and the more vigorously the Church will grow. The whole world is God's. He gives it to us to use; and those who use it for Him are prospered and have the more to give."

The ideal of self-support had been talked and taught in the native Church from its very beginning, and the Christians had been urged to contribute according to their means. Now it became a live issue.

The principle adopted was to estimate the financial ability of each circuit, founded on the amount contributed the previous year; the Mission would then make a definite appropriation of foreign funds necessary to bring each preacher's salary up to the sum required for his support.

Among the preachers there was not unanimity of thought on the subject. Indeed, there was much opposition to the plan among the native Christians, many declaring that the Methodist Church would be broken up and absorbed by other denominations if the project were further pressed.

Even Elder Ling, who had suffered cruel persecution in planting the Church in his pirate island, said:—

"It is too soon to require this; wait until the rich are converted, until some of the Chinese officers are members of the Church."

Others chimed in:—

"Yes, only the poor are now church members."

The Son of Thunder, while wishing the best for the Church, was, in this matter, inclined to be belligerent. In fact, before his conversion he had been a military officer. I remember the day when he came into our study in Foochow, full of criticism of the plan of self-support. He walked the floor, gesticulating and talking in a passionate voice. Mr. Sites sat quietly listening, giving him all the time he wanted. When his turbulent feelings were pretty well spent, the missionary said:—

"Let us kneel together and ask God for grace and wisdom to know and to do His will."

They knelt; in half a minute the recalcitrant was penitent, and was soon praying for forgiveness, with a cry that could be heard all over the house.

From the time he began preaching, Teacher Sia

had favored the principle of self-support, on the ground that it was reasonable and right.

"Who can tell how long we must wait?" he said. "The Church will never act until a beginning is made. Nor can we say to our people, 'Here, I'm your preacher. Feed and clothe me and my family.' No, we must willingly suffer want; must for a time, perchance, be destitute; then having served in the Christ spirit, making sacrifices, we shall see our native Christians, even out of poverty, joyfully coming up to their duty."

Such words, with the added heroic sacrifice he was actually making at the time, in order to carry out the principle, carried conviction. One evening Elder Sia requested Mr. Sites to come to the parsonage for a quiet confidential conversation. I found—says the Journal—that he wanted to consult with me about his being entirely released from foreign money; at the same time he would take his appointment from the Bishop as any other preacher does. He suggested that he might look to the native Church only for support, or he could engage in some work by which to support himself and yet give much time to the work of the ministry, as Paul did. He told me how, after preaching to a miscellaneous crowd, he was often contemptuously asked:—

"How much does the foreigner pay you for speaking those fine words?"

He said, while he was willing to bear reproach for Christ's sake, he wanted in his inner conscience to feel free. We turned the question over

and over until nearly midnight. I encouraged him to dismiss all thought of going into business; to give his whole time to the ministry; to cherish the ideal of native support, and perhaps in a very few years we would see it realized. Meantime, he had best endure patiently the reproach of receiving " foreign dollars " and look for its speedy end.

Sia continued in the regular ministry: but he soon got rid of the reproach of foreign money. He told his experience afterward to his brother preachers in some such words as these:—

" A year ago, I resolved henceforth to trust entirely to the native Church for support. My experience has been like Peter's when he started to go to His Lord on the water. At first, all seemed plain and easy; but soon after leaving the ship the waves began to roar around me and my faith was sorely tried. I cried, ' Lord, save me,' and, blessed be God, He heard me. When I came to my work, bringing my family with me, the prospect was very dark. I shall not try to tell you all my trials. God led me in a marvellous manner. Supplies came in ways most unexpected and unaccountable. They seemed to drop like manna from Heaven. It was the sweetest experience I ever had. The coarsest food seemed delicious, for we felt that it came from our Father. When tempted and tried I always found relief in prayer. Some persons have said to me, ' What will you do when supplies fail and yourself and family are left destitute? ' My reply is, ' I do

The Ascent to Ku-shan —Rock inscriptions from the writings of the sages.

not expect them to fail, but if they do fail, if I find before me no open door, I shall just stand still and looking up to my Saviour say, 'Lord, whither wilt Thou lead me?'"

When I read reports to-day of the wonderful spirit of giving, and the loyal support of native pastors, particularly in Hinghua and Hokchiang, I recall those far-gone days. I think of the foundations laid at that time in agony of soul and prayers and tears, as the cornerstone upon which a symmetrical church is now rising.

XXII

LARGER STRATEGY

"We are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;—
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems."

O'SHAUGHNESSY.

THE missionaries at Foochow had been studying the map. They had also been reading the newspapers, such as there were, —and newspapers published in China, in English, of course, were infinitely better, even then, than books on China for putting one in touch with the situation.

The books on China of that day were still mostly fairy tales. Maps were not greatly improved over those in which "Chinese Tartary" used to be shown as bordered by a fringe of griffins and dragons.

East and West were still East and West. The Mandarin at Bonnieburn getting his first lesson about the terrestrial globe on the missionary's teacup, was hardly more in need of light than missionary secretaries in New York, when the

question was the location of a new mission in China.

But the secretaries were men of loyalty and faith. When our Foochow Mission, like many another mission in that time of opportunity, urged an advance, our secretaries set about finding the means to make it.

The opportunity had come with the opening of Peking and the Yangtze Valley in consequence of the Arrow War in 1858 and the treaties of 1860. Mr. Sites had been sent out in view of this very opportunity. But the American war for the Union had intervened and neither men nor money could be had for new work. The year after the war ended, two new men were appointed to our mission.

They were the last to come out by sailing vessel, around the Cape. By the same token they were the last, perhaps, to be received with that lavish joy which marks the child's anticipation of successive Christmases at an age when Christmases are few and far between. Letters sent home, at the time, record in naïve detail every incident and aspect of the new arrivals.

"We were engaged in the services of our quarterly meeting,"—so runs one letter,—"and had just enjoyed an excellent love-feast; four Chinese had been admitted to baptism and to the fellowship of the Christian Church; a missionary had preached and the members of the church were engaged in joyfully celebrating the Lord's Supper, when our beloved Brother Sites entered the

church and passed up the aisle, followed by a strange gentleman. All eyes were fastened on the stranger and at the first interlude in the services we had the delightful privilege of welcoming our long-expected, long-prayed-for Brother Hart.

"Brother Wheeler's arrival was also attended with the most propitious circumstances. The members of the Mission had met at the usual time and place, for their monthly business session, and had deliberated in love and harmony concerning the interests of our work, had been unanimous in every decision made and had closed the meeting feeling 'How good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.' Just as we separated, Brother Wheeler and his family entered our Mission compound, and with gratitude we welcomed them to their new home in this Eastern land. The Chinese Christians gave him a joyful greeting, and he was deeply moved as he listened that evening to our Chinese brethren heartily singing the good old tunes of his native land."

Mr. Sites strongly favored the policy of sending only men with some experience in a mission field to open new work. It was understood that these two men, after a sufficient period of apprenticeship at Foochow, should be sent to begin the new missions. Accordingly, Hart was appointed to Central China in 1867 and Wheeler to Peking in 1869.

No spies returning from Canaan ever brought back bigger bunches of promise than our emissary to Central China after his first prospecting tour in the Yangtze Valley. He had gone up the coast

to Shanghai, about four hundred and fifty miles, thence up the great river, passing the cities of Chinkiang, Wuhu, Nanking and Kiukiang, all of which cities we now occupy. He was full of enthusiasm as he pictured to us the great valley of the Yangtze, with its fertile plains, and described the immense commercial importance of the Grand Canal,—something we knew of only from the studies of our school days.

He had selected as a starting point for the work the busy port of Kiukiang, on the southernmost bend of the Yangtze near Poyang Lake. He and Mr. Sites, with the zest of a new adventure, began at once estimating the miles southward from Poyang Lake to the borders of Fuhkien, and planning for the time when a Methodist chapel should be planted in every important city, one every twenty miles, until Foochow and Kiukiang should clasp hands in a union love-feast, perchance in our new-found outpost, the City of Lingering Peace.

A barrier of unpromising highlands between the upper Min and the Yangtze basin has delayed the realization of that particular dream. But larger things than were then dreamed have come to pass. When the Methodist Church in China met in quadrennial conference at Foochow last year, there came to the mother mission representatives of five prosperous missions, embracing a church membership of some forty thousand. These delegates came from Peking and a dozen other cities of North China, scattered along hundreds of miles of railway in two provinces; from

the whole lower basin of the Yangtze, between Kiukiang and Shanghai; from Hinghua on the south, where the work which was being pioneered in 1867 had long since expanded into a Conference of its own; and last but perhaps most flourishing field of all, from the Empire Province of West China beyond the Yangtze gorges, fifteen hundred miles from the sea.

Expansion in China was only an incident in world movements of which China was already a storm centre. Great things were doing in those days in the binding together of East and West. The Atlantic cable; the Suez canal; the Union Pacific railway; restoration and transformation in Japan; the Burlingame mission, which was the first real effort to make China acquainted with the West at home,—these were only a few of the signs of the times. For us at Foochow perhaps the most interesting item of all was the beginning of the Pacific Mail steamship service in 1867.

To get our mail in six weeks was too good to be true! "How wonderful"—writes the missionary to a college friend—"to think of this great steamship, a vast floating palace, crossing the wide Pacific Ocean! Home is one-half nearer than it was a year ago. Can you believe that London and Paris are getting their latest news from us by way of Japan, San Francisco and New York? 'Fact is stranger than fiction.' And why may we not hope to see along with these wondrous inventions and scientific achievements a corresponding increase of Christian effort to carry the

A Drowsy Village of the Hinghua Region.

gospel of peace to all the nations of the earth? Not in the slow and indifferent manner of the past, but with a zeal and energy corresponding to the spirit of the times in all material progress. Look no more toward the 'Far East' over seas and oceans, beyond kingdoms and empires, and fancy China to be a remote, strange, unwieldy, unapproachable nation. Lift your eyes and look directly into the face of this new, mighty, next-door neighbor, with but a single ocean intervening! I pray that the Church may now arise in the strength of our God and do valiantly in the redemption of China. Why has God allowed Protestant Christian nations to open up in this day the golden treasures of California and Australia? Why, but that these nations may be His messengers of mercy to heathen lands; accomplishing the Saviour's petition, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.'"

Now if extension was good in China, why should it not extend also to Japan? Might not a Christianized Japan even prove the salvation of China? Japan had now been linked up by steam with both America and China. It was time for American Methodism to be co-operating with other Christian agencies already engaged in the evangelization of the Island Empire.

So reasoned the little band of missionaries at Foochow. In 1871 they wrote home thus:—

"The present breaking up of their ancient social and political systems, with the eager desire of the Japanese to adopt the civilization of Chris-

tian nations, indicates that now is the golden opportunity for the Church to sow 'the seed of the kingdom' in the minds of the people. At the same time it admonishes us that failure on our part, at this favorable juncture, will greatly increase the difficulty of evangelizing Japan, and prove a serious hindrance to the progress of Christ's kingdom in the earth."

The three secretaries promptly replied, indorsing the project.

"It is a matter of first importance," wrote Durbin and Harris.

"It is our guilt that we undertake nothing," wrote Terry. And they undertook Japan.

Maclay, who had made the address on missions on the night when Nathan Sites heard his "call," was now sent from Foochow to open our work in Japan. He afterward became the founder also of our mission in Korea. Thus he ranks with William Butler as a pioneer of three mission fields of Methodism.

In less than the span of a generation the Methodist Church of Japan, uniting three great Methodist communions, has become an independent organization, with a native Bishop. To-day, in the light of recent history in Eastern Asia, a history of war, of diplomacy, of student migration and of dazzling changes in ancient customs, we can begin to see how Japan is involved in China's destiny. To those who foresaw the issue in all its larger outlines forty years ago, shall we not accord the meed of vision and of statesmanship?

XXIII

AN ARMORY

AT a square table in a plain room with boarded walls, and floor of pounded earth, several men are sitting. One of them is the once blind preacher, now an elder and in charge of the district. Another is the man whom he first brought to the light, now the pastor of that same chapel in the City of Lingering Peace. Others are preachers and teachers in nearby stations. In their midst sits the missionary. For four days they have spent their mornings thus, about the table, searching the Scriptures to learn the deep things of God and the plain way of bringing them home to men. Afternoons they have scattered to preach to groups on the street and in neighboring villages; and every evening they have met the little flock in the chapel for vesper hymn and prayer. This is the pioneer preachers' theological school.

At the end of this morning's study the missionary rises and says to Elder Dang:

"I must pack my bedding now, Ging Dong, and start down river this afternoon. By the way, have you anything you would like to send to your boy in Foochow?"

"I am troubling you very much," says Elder Dang, as he brings out a package, ready wrapped in coarse brown paper. "But if you would take this it will make Sing Ling very happy. It is only a long coat which we have had made for him."

"Oh, yes, those fine young fellows in the new Gospel school must put on airs!" laughs the missionary. "But tell me," he continues seriously, "what do you think of this new plan of a regular school for preachers?"

"Ah, the boys have advantages we old preachers never had; but then," laying his hand affectionately on the missionary's shoulder, "we have had the advantage of a schooling such as they will never have."

In China, as on most frontiers of the Church, the earliest theological seminary is not an institution but a man. Its laboratory is the broad highway, its lecture-room the wayside chapel. The proposal to establish a Biblical school at Foochow in the early seventies occasioned considerable debate.

Some thought the peripatetic method good enough. Members of the various missions discussed the project together. It was a representative of scholarly New England Congregationalism whose arguments finally convinced the doubters.

The most active promoter of the project was a young graduate of the college at Berea, Franklin Ohlinger, who had recently come to the field and

in whom German-American scholarship was united with rare evangelistic zeal. He was the logical choice for principal; but he was still new in the language and insisted that Mr. Sites should be appointed. Mr. Sites agreed, for one year only. He was always restive when confined to a professor's chair. But he always took the liveliest interest in the seminary, often lecturing and continually seeking out promising youth from country churches, whom he encouraged and often aided to come here and prepare for the ministry.

It was the custom to send out students two and two at vacation times; some going to assist an overworked pastor in evangelistic work; others going to large villages where family friends wanted help in preaching the doctrine to their people. As they came, one or two at a time, to say good-bye, Mr. Sites never failed to advise and pray with them and start them gladly on their way. And when they were gone he did not forget them. He often spoke of them and remembered them by name in prayer. Then, on their return, he would promptly bring them together, or if possible devote the first mid-week prayer meeting evening to hearing their experiences. I remember his coming in from such a meeting and telling me exultingly of the love for the work which was evident as each told the story of work done and of eager desire to prepare for more effective service.

A teacher in the school, who was a literary

graduate, told how he spoke to a sick woman in her heathen home, telling her of Jesus who could heal her soul and turn her sorrow into joy; then good medicines would more surely heal her body. Being invited again to her house, he took the preacher of the chapel and one of the students, and all talked and prayed with the family. After a time, the man of the house said:

"I fully believe in your God."

"How can you say so," replied the teacher, "when here stand your idols, your censer and tablets? If you believe in the Christians' God you have no further use for these."

"In very truth," said the man more earnestly, "I believe your God is the Lord and beside Him there is no other."

And forthwith he removed all the idols and heathen emblems.

A unique occidental-oriental programme marked the first public graduating exercises in 1876. For six years—says the Journal—we have been aiming at more direct development of this educational branch of church power; and on this occasion with twenty young men in the Biblical school, and fifteen in the Seminary, the institution presented a very creditable appearance.

Classes were examined in Theology, Bible Hand-Book, Homiletics, Acts of the Apostles, Geography and Astronomy. Of the native classics, selections were recited from Confucius and

Mencius, and translated into the colloquial dialect. In the same way the students covered the Book of Historical Documents, the books of poetry and selections from ancient essayists. No need to go to Greece and Rome for classics. The Chinese student boasts his own ancient sages: Confucius, five hundred, and Mencius, four hundred and fifty years before Christ. Their later classic literature dates from B. C. 400 to A. D. 1600, and is full of wise saws and romantic history. There is found the story of the Emperor who built the Great Wall; of his magnificent palace, one hundred miles in breadth, whose height lacked little of touching the clouds; enclosed within the palace grounds were winding streams, spanned by high arching bridges of exquisite workmanship, so dazzling in their beauty that the people often took them for rainbows,—and so the tale runs on.

At this commencement, twelve undergraduate students made ten-minute speeches on such subjects as these: "The Place of the Pentateuch"; "Why was the Law Established?"; "The Divinity of Christ"; "Curious Things in Nature"; "The Solar System." Three graduating students presented theses.

There was singing; and, marvellous to relate, a Chinese student accompanied at the organ. The wife of the Berean scholar had for the past year been teaching a son of Pastor Hu and also two or three of the girls of the boarding school to play simple accompaniments.

One of the subjects on which Mr. Sites lectured in the Theological School was astronomy. This subject was one of his favorite diversions. In collaboration with a member of the American Board Mission he prepared a text-book of astronomy in Chinese, illustrated with elaborate charts. It was in the classical language and has been much used in schools throughout China.

Always the itinerant, he was nevertheless always the student. Like Asbury, and on a circuit of about the same length, two hundred and fifty miles, he studied "in the saddle." In his meditations, at the end of a year of peculiar stress and responsibility in mission administration, he records a stiff list of books read, devotional and biographical, which helps to explain the power of his personal touch upon his preachers.

Yet he was essentially a man of One Book. At the last General Missionary Conference of China which he attended, he was a member of the Committee on Bible Translation. This Committee reported the happy plan which solved a difficult problem, the plan of translation into three distinct versions, high classical, easy classical and colloquial Chinese. The project thus inaugurated is just now approaching completion.

A few months ago a Union School of Theology was set up, comprising the schools of the three missions at Foochow. The prophecy of getting together, which might have been discerned in the joint discussion of the school idea forty years

ago, has now been realized. And herein too is a promise of such enlarged opportunities for the deeper study of theology as shall attract to the school the brightest minds among our Christian students.

XXIV

MARTIAL MUSIC

FEW native Chinese melodies have been made amenable to the expression of Christian sentiment; nor has Chinese poetic form been christianized. The tunes are generally imported with the doctrine, and the verse must be translated or constructed to fit the metre.

And yet, to-day, our seminaries and normal schools are sending out young men and young women, to pulpits, to Sabbath schools, to day schools and kindergartens, carrying the gospel in music.

How is it done?

Once, during a week of annual meetings in the long ago, Brother Ohlinger was moved to test his fresh mastery of the language by translating a hymn. It was "Revive Us Again." Teacher Sia happened in, and together they wrought. The first stanza went well. "Hallelujah" was taken over bodily, likewise "Amen." Their stumbling-block was the crucial word "revive." If rendered etymologically it would be understood as "resurrect." Even so Methodistic a term as "revival" had not yet found its place in Chinese Christian speech. But once the Berean scholar's idea had

been transfused into the Confucian scholar's consciousness, Elder Sia's quick spiritual insight divined the classic form. The hymn was quickly finished. They knew it was good. It was given at once to the printer and within an hour it was distributed at the meeting then in session. From the first, it took with the assembled preachers. It was in their hearts as they scattered to their appointments.

At that meeting Mr. Sites had been assigned the Hinghua district, and, as was his wont, he went along with his preachers returning to their work. Two days they traveled overland afoot. As they went they sang:

"We praise Thee, O God, for the Son of thy Love."

So their song rolled on, rousing echoes from quiet hillsides and awakening drowsy villages. Children and women ran together, and called the men, to see fifteen Chinese gentlemen and a foreigner marching through their streets, singing:

"Hallelujah, Amen,——Revive us again!"

This hymn and a hundred others, in spite of their alien cadences, seem to have become completely naturalized in China. There is life in their echoes as they roll from soul to soul and they gather mighty volume as the years go by.

XXV

INTERLUDE: WHEN THE HEART SINGS

IT was the old story. Our young theological students were not content. As the months passed, some of them developed a desire for certain electives which the men of the Faculty could not supply. That was where I came in again.

The first practical missionary work to which I was introduced, as you know, was a daily morning visit to our Orphanage to superintend the bathing of the babies and to look after their health and comfort, applying a lotion, a salve or a poultice as the case might require. Many of the little ones were sadly afflicted, seeming to say, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." Considering their many ailments it was not strange that of about eighty who were taken in during the short period this institution was open to receive the little outcasts, only twenty-three lived to maturity.

I remember the reception of the last baby. The Mission had discussed the propriety of closing the asylum, and a notice had been put up saying that no more children would be received.

However, there she was just outside the gate, rolled in an old rag, lying on a flat stone in the

Blossoms from the Kindergarten.

'Tis the Wedding Morning.

shade of the wall. Our attention was called to her by hearing that peculiar, gasping, infant wail which strikes so deeply a mother heart. The men folk said, "Let her lie there. Somebody is watching around and will carry her away when they see we do not take her in." By and by she had cried herself to sleep, and there lay the little handful so helpless, so forsaken; but she soon awoke only to renew the piteous cry, her little limbs quivering from hunger and the hard stone bed.

Our warm-hearted Mrs. Martin, whose window overlooked the scene, could endure it no longer, and her tearful pleadings opened the gate and gave to the hapless innocent the food, comfort and care which the asylum afforded.

Some were healthy babies. One, I remember, was favored in having for her nurse a nice little old woman who always kept her shining clean and well fed, and even to young womanhood her plump form gave credit to her good keeping.

There were no kindergartens in those days, and when at about eight years of age, these children were placed in the boarding school, they were not all especially promising. Discipline by their nurses had been so defective that it required the utmost patience and perseverance to teach them that their own will was not law. Some were not strong and their lessons were often omitted while they were daily dosed with cod liver oil.

One was especially quick to learn, but had a fiery temper, and when undergoing discipline, in

the heat of passion, she more than once left upon her teacher's hands the prints of her teeth and the scratches of her sharp nails. But year by year she showed improvement in health and deportment, in mind and in heart, which gave us encouragement to hope that such lives had not been rescued in vain, but that they might, in future years, rescue and save others.

When about sixteen, with a number of their schoolmates, these girls were received into the Church, where they remained acceptable members. When they were finally among the oldest girls in school, we put upon them many responsibilities in teaching younger ones in the sewing and in the domestic department, and always we found them trustworthy and helpful.

We used to think we might have some difficulty in marrying off our foundlings, as they were a class which we supposed might not be sought after as wives. In that day, an unmarried woman of good repute was an unknown thing in China. Instead, however, we had difficulty in keeping them in school as long as they ought to stay, so eagerly were they sought by the choice youths of our Church.

After Chinese girls have reached their teens, it is exceedingly impolite for them to talk to or have any communication with young men. Imagine then our horror and vexation to learn that one of our loveliest girls had received a love letter,—a proposal, in fact,—from a theological student in the building a few rods distant. A

little investigation revealed the fact that young Mr. L——, having fallen in love, had been advised by a venerable church father that in western lands these little matters were adjusted by correspondence, and that to address Miss Peach Blossom by letter would be the most appropriate and successful manœuvre. The girl was frightened,—what girl isn't under similar circumstances?—and was only too glad to take advice and burn the letter, cease to think about him and be more reserved and modest than ever before.

The girls were all warned not to disgrace themselves by answering or even receiving such letters, and were instructed that anything pertaining to the subject of marriage must come through the Mission. But our girls, going to church every Sabbath, seeing people frequently, hearing the theological students preach, joining in the singing and other acts of worship, mingling with the people of the public congregation,—notwithstanding that they were supposed to walk with downcast eyes,—could hardly be expected to be unmoved or to have no likes or dislikes; for the Chinese are not the placid, unfeeling beings that many persons regard them, but rather our fellow-creatures, who love and hate, weep and laugh, much as we do, although their emotions are excited by springs that often differ widely from ours.

However, it was innocence itself, and must have been very amusing to sedate Miss Woolston, then in charge of the school, when Fragrance-of-the-

Lotus came to her one evening to reveal her love for one of the students, and to ask her if they could not be betrothed. When reminded that such a proposal ought to come first from him, in blushing confusion she replied that she understood in our western countries the lady proposed, and she thought she was doing the correct thing to speak her love for him. But she did not have long to wait. Through some strange spirit communication, or perhaps the kind-hearted gossip of some old church mother, young Mr. S—— soon petitioned the Mission to give him our lovely Fragrance-of-the-Lotus, and allow them to be betrothed.

A Chinese betrothal is an elaborate affair, making out and signing papers with exactness, and bestowing upon the young lady bracelets and other jewelry. All this we feared might turn the heads of our girls in a way that would seriously interfere with their best success in school duties, so we gave the young men, as well as the girls, to understand that their wishes would have favorable consideration, but that the girls must remain in school two years longer, or until about eighteen, and that we did not wish any mention of betrothal until within a few weeks of the time of marriage. The young men went out as itinerant pastors, and the girls, to all appearance, forgot that such men existed.

A year later, at the close of the commencement exercises of the Theological and High School,

Precious Pearl revealed to me her admiration for Mr. T——, one of the graduates. She had observed the brilliancy with which he passed examinations in different classes, and withal his deep piety and zeal in work for Christ. I admired her choice, but had no idea how his heart was beating, when to my surprise, an hour afterward, Mr. Ohlinger came in to tell me that young Mr. T—— wanted us to promise him Precious Pearl before he left, and that then he could go off to his work in great happiness. What human agent assisted the communication between these two hearts, we could not ascertain, but that they never spoke or wrote to each other we were sure.

Graceful Chrysanthemum, who was always rather shy and backward, although the eldest of the girls, had as yet no offer. There was a certain young man, a student in the Seminary, whom I esteemed for his own worth and because I had known his gifted parents as earnest toilers on the very outposts of our work, ever since he was a little boy. Mrs. D——, his mother, had written to me, asking if we would let her son have a wife from among our girls. I decided to bestow upon him a choice girl—one so quick, so bright, so good that she would surprise and delight the heart of her mother-in-law with her accomplishments. While the selection was made in my own mind, it was not necessary that the girl should know about it as she was young and he ought to go out and preach a year, at least, before he married.

One day when he called to bring me a message from his mother, thinking I ought to aid him in getting up sentiment on the subject before he left the Seminary, I mentioned to him his mother's wish, and the name of the girl I designed for him. He looked down at the floor, blushed and smiled, but that was all.

The time had now come for the betrothal of the three who had been promised. They were to be married at the close of the term in June, and the wedding trousseau of each must be provided by her betrothed, requiring from four to six weeks of dressmakers' and jeweller's work. This was attended to with exactness, although the parties never spoke to each other.

About this time Mr. Sites, returning from Hinghua, said to me:

"Mr. C—— who graduated last year, and is doing well on his circuit, asks if we will give him a wife from the school."

I replied, "I don't think I like him very much, but what one does he want?"

"Oh, that doesn't matter. He will be glad to get any one of them."

Finding the missionaries all spoke well of Mr. C——, I finally said:

"Graceful Chrysanthemum has had no offer. We had better let him have her, and she will be pleased not to be left behind when the others who are younger are being married." I went to her the following day and told her that Mr. C——, of whom she had known, would like to take her

for a wife if she was pleased to have him. She hesitated, then quietly said:

"Mr. D—— is my choice."

"Now," thought I, "this is a fine state of things! She has set her affections on my young friend, Mr. D—— for whom I have chosen quite a different girl!" So I said:

"Oh, don't think about him. He ought not to be married for two years, at least, while Mr. C—— would like to marry at once—as soon as we can get you ready."

I supposed this presentation of the subject would quite decide her to take Mr. C——, and told her to think about it and talk with Huoi-mu, the grandma matron, and let me know her decision. Two days later, Huoi-mu came to me and said:

"Graceful Chrysanthemum is in great trouble. She has not eaten for two days, but she wants me to tell you that she will be submissive and obey your words." I answered:

"If she does not want Mr. C—— she must not take him. Tell her not to be sorrowful. She is welcome to stay in school many years, but tell her she must not think anything more about Mr. D——." Two days more passed and our Graceful Chrysanthemum still drooped. When I spoke to her about it she replied:

"I cannot be happy; you do not love me! You allow the other girls to marry each the man she chooses. I won't marry Mr. C——. I'll live to be twenty-five years old, or even thirty; yes, I'll

die in the school before I will marry him. I want Mr. D——! *I Cheu nguai, nguai cheu i, ia ong lau!*" Literally, "He has looked at me and I have looked at him this long time!"

When I saw all this spirit in our shy little Graceful Chrysanthemum I thought:

"Yes, dear, you deserve just such a superior husband as young Mr. D—— will surely make," so I told her to be assured that I did love her and wished her best happiness, and now I wanted her to worry no more, for I believed it would all come right.

Afterward as I thought it all over,—how different she was from the girl I had chosen for my favorite, and how he might not be willing to give up the pretty bright girl I had named to be his, in case she were willing,—who should come to the door but Mr. D—— himself, saying he wished to speak a few words with Mr. Sites privately. I withdrew at once, but was soon afterwards informed that his portentous few words were, that if I were willing, he would prefer Graceful Chrysanthemum—she had always been his choice. How glad I was! and I resolved then and there to make matches no more.

Mr. D—— was made an exception to the rule requiring him to go out in the work a year or more before marrying. As he must go away a distance of two hundred and forty miles, it seemed better that he should take his bride with him, so they were betrothed at once, and preparations

began for the marriage of our four eldest girls at the same time.

Early on the morning of a sunny June day, four elegant, bright red bridal chairs stood in waiting at the door of the schoolhouse. The last touches were put upon the toilets of our four brides. The church bell rang a merry peal as we assisted them into their sedans, whence they proceeded to the church, each chair carried in state by four coolies. These gay sedans, carefully closed all around, were carried through the wide doors into the church and placed side by side facing the altar. The chairs were then opened and each bride led to her place where she was immediately joined by her bridegroom. It is customary for Chinese brides to be kept closely veiled throughout the marriage ceremony, and this, I think, had given our young men some uneasiness, lest among so many, a mistake might be made. But I did not fancy having our pretty girls covered with heavy red flannel veils on a warm June morning, and so, instead, I provided each with a veil of rose-colored net, which was exceedingly becoming and very pleasing to the Chinese.

Mr. Sites read the introductory portion of the service and prayers for the four couples at once, and the questions of mutual obligation he asked of each by name, and pronounced each couple man and wife in the name of the Holy Trinity. Our people had never seen more than one couple married at a time and predicted great confusion, but we had a carefully arranged programme which

was as carefully carried out, and all passed smoothly and to the delight of the native congregation, one of whom said:

"Since the creation it was not so seen in China."

A delightful reception followed the ceremony, after which our four precious girls started away, each with her young preacher husband, in a little native boat, up or down the Min River as the case might be. They were stationed respectively fifteen, fifty, one hundred, and two hundred and forty miles distant from Foochow, to find theirs, possibly, the only Christian home in an entirely heathen city. Upon them, in those heroic early days, fell the responsibility of holding up before a sin-sick people the Christ who promised if He be lifted up to draw all men unto Himself.

Rapid Transit.

A houseboat waited at the jetty for the turning of the tide.

XXVI

THE ARSENAL

ON a New Year's eve a houseboat waited at the China Merchants' jetty for the turning of the tide. Three passengers were already on board. They were old friends, not only to one another but to you. There was Elder Sia, and with him, as in the old days when they tramped over the hills together on preaching tours, the converted blacksmith Lee and the boy preacher Yek, both of them now elders too. "Conference" had just closed, the Christmas Conference of 1877,—Conference with a big "C." Like the famous Christmas Conference at Baltimore nearly one hundred years before, it had meant great things to an infant church.

This had been, in a legal sense, the first session of the Foochow Conference. The growing annual meeting of the early days had attained, so to speak, its majority. There being now a sufficient number of ordained ministers, they had been constituted, according to the laws of the Church, into a self-governing body like any such in the home land. Isaac W. Wiley, who came first to Foochow as medical missionary in the early years of the Mission, had now come back as Bishop and, in

the name of the Church at large, had received this ninety-first commonwealth into the Methodist Union.

The three men on the boat, while they waited, talked of trifles as Chinese will when matters of essential import are on their minds. Soon the missionary arrived—alone. He had hoped to bring the Bishop to attend the Hinghua district conclave; but a winter storm was brewing and the Bishop was weary with travel and toil. So the four set out without him.

The houseboat swung off with the tide. It was still early. They had ample time for a good talk before unrolling their beds. The missionary rejoiced in this reunion with his fellow-soldiers of many a sturdy fight. It was eight years since the three had been ordained, in that first group of seven, and sent out to their several pastorates; so the old friends seldom found themselves all together as now. Moreover, for the missionary it was watch-night; and although the western New Year's eve meant nothing as yet to the Chinese calendar, it made the westerner reminiscent. He spoke of the first formal Annual Meeting at Foochow, in 1862, the year after his arrival in China, and of the growth of the little group of workers of that day into this strong body. He went back to the beginning and recalled the tradition of Collins' heroic challenge to the Church on behalf of China; how Collins, within the year after the founding of the Mission, went home to die, and how others came. Then the whole decade with-

out a convert—the first small beginnings—and now!

The Bishop had conducted the communion service, in the closing hours of the Conference, with Mr. Sites as interpreter. A great audience had been deeply moved with the spirit of the solemn service and the Bishop's inspired words. Then the appointments had been read, having for the first time the full force of episcopal authority. And with the appointments, many of them carrying the assurance of toil and pain, had come the episcopal benediction weighted with richer than earthly comfort to that band of workers who were now, as never before, united in one body for the furtherance of the gospel.

Mr. Sites had continually rejoiced in the growing strength of the native ministry. Of the class of preachers ordained at this conference some were graduates of our Theological school, and all had seen from two to four years in regular work. The missionary, in his work of supervision, had taken pains to put upon the native ministers all their responsibilities. He had found the growing Church greatly pleased to receive the native pastor, and he rejoiced to say with John the Baptizer, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

When prayers had been said and good-nights exchanged the boat was well away toward Drum Mountain Point, halfway to Pagoda Anchorage. The plan was to catch the early morning tide at Pagoda and go up with the water, on the south branch, to the landing-point for Hinghua. But

alas—says the Journal—the wind arose furiously, and after rolling and tossing to and fro, and again and again tacking vainly back and forth across the river against a cold, heavy head wind, our captain declared he could go no further, and so he cast anchor.

Several times through the night, when there was a lull in the wind, we urged him to be off, but he always answered, "Impossible." The next tide met us here in mid-course. A whole day would be lost.

At seven o'clock in the morning wind and tide were fair for us to go back to Foochow. Elder Sia moved to go back. This was seconded, but after discussion Elder Lee moved to amend by pressing on against the tide for a few miles and seeing the Government Arsenal and Dock-yards which are a little above Pagoda Anchorage. This amendment carried by unanimous vote with uplifted hands.

Some hearty pleasantries followed in which all participated.

"In all the sixteen years of my travel on this route," said I, "never before was our boat thus delayed. There must be a Jonah on board!"

In a moment all had set on Elder Yek as the man. He was going east for a brief visit with Elder Lee when he should have been going off to his own work in the west. Yek insisted on the casting of lots before being consigned to the water. The evidences were so clear, all the rest

declared lots were unnecessary; however, mercy tempered justice and he was spared.

Approaching the Arsenal at noon, every man felt the zest of the schoolboy starting in on an unscheduled holiday. To these Chinese preachers it meant much more: a day of wonder at the power which God has committed to man and a big "find" of sermon-material. For to the oriental mind the parable is the common resort in expounding any theme.

Entering the shops they see the noiseless drill, the gentle lathe, the mighty shears clipping off half-inch bars of iron, which Brother Lee thinks so gentle in motion that they would stand still if he would but lay his hand upon them; and then the whirl of the band-saw and the buzz of the circular saw! Hundreds of feet of shafting and numerous bands and fly-wheels communicate motion and power everywhere, and lead them to inquire for the source of all this power and motion. Yonder, away in a little building, working noiselessly, is the mighty engine. How wonderful!

On then to the rolling mill and forges. As they enter they hear, Thump! thump! and soon they see a bright glare of light from the farther end of the great shed. A shaft of iron twenty feet long and over a foot square in cross section, some six feet of it burning red, is under the great forge hammer. Up goes the ponderous weight of seven thousand pounds and down again on the red-hot iron, which loses nearly two inches in the first stroke. Again and again the shaft moves and the

hammer, like a thunderbolt, does its work, while the earth around trembles at every stroke. The little blacksmith, Elder Lee, is especially interested and seems at a loss to find words to express his astonishment.

Fortunately while they wait the ponderous balance wheel starts up, the furnace door is lifted, and plate after plate of red-hot iron is taken out and passed under the rollers. Common and uncommon things are all new to this company and their enjoyment is intense.

As they start to return they see there by the riverside the slip gently gliding down into the water, fixing itself under a great ship, then bringing itself and the whole ship bodily up out of the water;—and all, again, worked by the unpretentious engine yonder, whence the power is communicated to a system of forty-eight screws, at equal intervals, the whole length of the building. I explain all this to the brethren and they exclaim:

"Wondrous power! and wondrous skill to invent and apply machinery to such useful ends!"

When we are once more seated in our boat, the essays in application begin. The engine they compare to the Bible; the fire to the Holy Spirit; and as the man at the lever of the ponderous steam-hammer, so is the minister at the Gospel lever: he opens the valve, God sends the power; and as the bands communicate the power of the engine to the machinery, so love brings us into communion with God and with one another. As the machinery moves steadily, doing its appointed

task in the midst of surrounding confusion, so should the Christian go steadily forward undisturbed by outward influences.

And so indeed it was and must be in our own little section of God's great workshop for the making of men. The machinery was now complete and in good running order. More and more of it was being constructed of native materials. Our prayer as we went on our way was for the gift of Power, that the Master Workman might realize, in us all, His high design and form for Himself even here in China a glorious Church without flaw or failing for the work of the years.

UNDERTONE

"O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

GEORGE MATHESON.

XXVII

THE COST

I HAVE before me the draft of a letter addressed by Nathan Sites to his parents, in which he first tells them of his missionary call. In it he says: "If my life and health are spared, I do not think of returning under ten or fifteen years, and it may be not at all."

In those days the usual time of taking a furlough was after ten years of service on the mission field. We remained twelve. Why? Because at the expiration of ten years there seemed in our health no imperative requirement for the change; and Mr. Sites was unwilling to leave the work unless providentially forced to go. Another reason, though we tried not to think of it, was that we knew when we returned to China again after our rest at home we should be obliged to leave behind us in the homeland our first-born, Belle, who had commenced her strenuous missionary life when just five weeks old, entering the traveling connection, as the Methodists say, in going with us to our lonely country station of Oxvale; and our active little son.

In the later years of our first term we sometimes found brief respite from the midsummer heat on a trip by small native boat to Sharp Peak,

a rocky island at the mouth of the Min River, where sea breezes blow. Once or twice the priests at the great temple on Drum Mountain kindly took us in to spend a few days among their rustling pines.

One summer after we had been ten years in Foochow, Mr. Sites was suddenly taken down with a serious and excruciatingly painful illness. Nowadays, I fancy, it would have been called appendicitis; there would have been an operation, and doubtless his work would have ended then and there. Our ignorance was bliss. For a week he suffered, with very brief intervals of rest; while through weary nights and anxious days we poulticed and prayed. The doctor did his best, and at last the pain was gone as suddenly as it had come.

That summer Mr. Sites enjoyed his first sea trip to the North, visiting the missions on the China coast and along the Yangtze River as far as Hankow. The experience was fruitful in larger views of mission polity and clearer visions of the triumphs of the Cross.

When we started for America it was by way of Hong Kong and San Francisco. The Pacific Mail steamers did not then touch at Shanghai or at any of the western ports of Japan. At Yokohama we had time for the luxury of a railway trip on the newly constructed line to Tokio. In what seemed an incredibly short time—six weeks after leaving the China coast—we were back once more among the dear Ohio hills.

Father Sites was awaiting us in the old homestead, happy beyond words to see Nathan's children. Mother Sites was not there; she had passed on three years before to the heavenly home. Our children ran free in garden and orchard, or came shouting from the harvest fields, mounted on high loads of fresh hay. My husband was constantly being called away to make missionary addresses and was much of the time among the churches, busy as missionaries on furlough always are.

But the glory of the free days on the farm, at home! The elixir of unpolluted air, the nectar of water uncooked! It made the man a boy again to gather pears from the gaunt old tree, planted before he was born. And then once more to swing the axe by the woodpile, choosing to split the knottiest chunks for very joy of conquest.

Again we were back at my father's home in Mohawk Valley, Ohio, where the junior preacher had found his fate and I my effectual call. It was here with father and mother Moore that we really made our home. They would sometimes intimate that we had given enough of life to China and ought to remain in our own country. We often had to remind them that Mr. Sites did not for a moment entertain the thought of remaining in America. When he consecrated his life to missionary work in China, it was for life, and to die in the harness.

But now the ever-present thought before us was our inevitable separation from our children. This unrest naturally detracted from our best re-

cuperation. Mr. Sites was always comforting himself and me with assurance of God's goodness and His planning our lives in love so much better than we could do for ourselves. Then, we had His promised care for our children for Christ's sake and the gospel's. Alas, my heart could not then receive consolation. With tears falling, we often stood beside the children when they were asleep at night; and as we looked down on those innocent, smiling faces, we asked ourselves and each other:

"Does God require this? Never to see their child-faces again?"

"Then, too," I said, "they have always lived so close to me; how can they stumble through their sleepy prayers at night beside another woman's knee, or confide to her the troubles or naughtiness of the day?"

Willing and yet unwilling, we seemed to be carried along by force of circumstances—busy planning for their clothing and comfort when we should be gone, and all the time furtively saying: "We cannot do it. Oh, must we?"

The day came; we were saying good-bye to friends, to parents, to many dear ones. The appointed hour to leave had come. We had gone through the form of taking our last supper together. There was a drizzling rain. The little son was waiting for his good-bye beside the carriage which was to take us to the train. I turned for a final look at our little daughter. There she stood in silhouetted profile, in the open door-

way. I heard her brave, tearful voice, as she called:

"Good-bye, my splendid Papa! Good-bye, my precious Mother!"

The horses were whipped up, and the carriage rumbled and splashed through the slushy street, as if to drown the moan of my breaking heart.

XXVIII

THE CAMPAIGN RENEWED

ONCE more in the mission field, we launched into the work as of old. New missionaries had arrived and some old ones had gone home.

The home mail came—the children's first little letters. They told us what a happy time they had the next day after we left, helping grandma make maple sugar eggs and such funny animal cookies! We were glad that their minds had been diverted, and that they did not through those days realize the pangs of separation as their parents did.

I no longer had excuse for teaching our own children. My hands seemed empty. So I picked myself up and went with my husband seventy-five miles down into the Hinghua district, where he proposed making a tour, stiffening up the churches; while I visited the day schools and the women who were doing deaconess work.

It was with joy and surprise that I now found the women of that beginners' class of four years before doing acceptable work as Bible women.

When Mr. Sites' first morning meeting closed, he announced for me a women's meeting at two

o'clock in the afternoon. When the hour came the women's meeting was more than half men. But I was pleased to see how confidently these shy women, with modest bearing, each in turn stepped forward and took her part. The preacher's wife—a young thing—offered the opening prayer. Then they sang, "Jesus loves me, this I know." I talked to them in the Foochow dialect, each sentence being interpreted into the Hinghua dialect by our sweet little Mrs. Wong.

I read from "The Bible Picture Book" the story of Hannah, consecrating her little son to the Lord; and of Eli's failure to require obedience from his sons, of God's consequent displeasure and their punishment. Then three of the women were invited, one by one, to tell in a few words how she would teach Chinese mothers to train their children.

My husband, following his programme, left Hinghua City and proceeded to another central point, where he had invited the preachers from circuits in immediate proximity to meet him for study, instruction, preaching and prayer.

At the same time I went in my sedan chair in another direction to see and examine some day schools for girls. First, I went out twenty miles to see a school taught by a "church father," because there was no woman there prepared to teach. No missionary lady had ever been here before, and the novelty brought the whole village out to see, thronging the open court and schoolroom. I found the school in session with sixteen

girls present. Five or six of them were between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. Usually the pupils are only from seven to twelve years old. Now, as the teacher told me, these larger girls wanted to be prepared to teach and earn two silver dollars every month! I was glad these girls were in school,—glad to see the modest blush mount their cheeks as, with downcast eyes, they took their places to recite, standing by my side. The recitations were all from Christian books. I asked the teacher how it was that he had not raised the number of pupils to twenty. He said:

"The mind of our people is very dark. The parents fear this school is a trap and that the Christians will kidnap these girls and sell them to foreigners who will ship them off to America."

Then he lifted the very little ones, as they came forward one by one to recite, and with grandfatherly pride stood them upon the table, where with their heads above the crowd they could be seen and heard. Thus he tried to make my visit a means of reassurance to his constituency. We talked familiarly, sang hymns and had a pleasant time together. When I asked the girls if they liked to read, with one voice they answered:

"Delighted!"

I slept that night in a little room with earthen floor and with pounded earth walls, blank and bare and the color of the red earth of which they are made. When the door was closed, the only place where a ray of light could penetrate was a pane of glass about three by four inches, in the

Supper-time.

Not a spring mattress, but
plain boards.

tiled roof. My bed was not a spring mattress, but plain boards, between which and my bones there was only my cotton comforter; and although I turned many times, morning came and I had not yet found any soft side!

My next school was a long way off in another direction. The road was generally level and much of it covered deep with sand, blown there by the wind; for we were now nearing the coast. We looked far out over the sea from whence a strong northeaster blew, so that it was with difficulty that my three good-natured chair coolies staggered along under their burden. At last the little town was in sight and all its inhabitants on the lookout for us. One after another the Christians came forward and gave their greeting:

"Peace, peace."

Modestly lingering behind them, but with an eager light of welcome in her face, came the young teacher, one of our boarding-school graduates.

She called the roll of her school, nineteen names, and I wrote them down on my prepared blanks, inquiring one by one what progress each had made, what books she could recite and made note of it.

Where all had memorized the same book, the whole school stood around in a semi-circle, and I called on each in turn to recite two or three pages until the book was completed. In this way they all went through the catechism and a number of Christian booklets. Then about half their number kept on in the same way through the gospels

of Matthew and Mark; I tested them, skipping a chapter here and there, without in the least disconcerting any one. Then three, who had outstripped the others, continued all through Luke, and finally when it began to grow dark, finished by repeating in concert the first five chapters of the gospel of John.

These little girls are inspired with a love for their books, as is their enthusiastic little teacher, who, in less than three years, has read, that is memorized, all the New Testament and through the book of Samuel in the Old Testament.

It was here that my husband overtook me. He began to think I had been going alone long enough; so left his meeting in charge of some one else and came across to find me. The little schoolgirls each smilingly bowed their good-night and ran away home.

"One more day's work for Jesus,
O, yes, a weary day!"

were the words we involuntarily hummed, as we turned into an adjoining room prepared for our occupancy. This room was an improvement on the one of the previous night; it had a brick floor and a window, or rather an opening in the wall, two feet square, with solid board blinds. This bed was also beautifully improved by having an armful of fresh straw spread over the boards.

As we made our supper on sweet potatoes and boiled eggs, with a little dessert of bananas and

ginger-snaps, a friendly group stood around to see how we did it without chopsticks.

Our little evening service had been held in the chapel, but the people were loath to go. We felt a strange warming of the heart toward them as we looked into their faces hardened with the stress of toil but transfigured with the light of love. It seemed, away down on that bleak peninsula, so far from home and our own darling children, as if we ourselves were drawn closer to the heart of God and so to all who love. As the people lingered, Mr. Sites took out his flute, and the dingy walls echoed the sweet plaint of "Home, Sweet Home." And of home we dreamed.

Next morning we breakfasted by the light of a candle and were early on our way, returning to Hinghua City. Our road took us through a town on the sea coast where there are fine Roman Catholic buildings. Mr. Sites called on the Spanish priest, who received him politely. They were obliged to use the Chinese language in conversation. The priest afterward told an English gentleman, a merchant, who happened that way, that he had been surprised a few days before by having a call from a *heretic,* who was traveling with his wife.

XXIX

BATTLE SCARS

ONCE, as the boat rushed down the last rapid toward the smooth pool above "Watermouth," in the glory of another victory over waves and rocks, the Journal sang:

"Beautiful, foaming, boiling, placid,
Turbulent River Min!
Ever changing, ever the same,
Ever going, ever abiding,—"

And so he might have written of the people too.

Strange indeed it was that after journeyings oft, in which he had been received with lavish courtesy by officials of all ranks and with brotherly regard by people of every class, he should be the one of all the missionaries to suffer brutal treatment at the hands of a mob in Yenping.

After our visit home, Mr. Sites' appointed work, for three or four years, lay in the southern districts near the coast. At the annual conference in 1879, however, he was assigned the supervision of two districts in the up-river region of his earliest pioneer days, each of which had now also a native Presiding Elder.

Proceeding promptly, as usual, to his field, he

Timber Rafts on the River Min.

arrived at Yenping in early December. There had been trouble, years before, between a Chinese elder of the church and the owner of the chapel premises. The landlord asserted, and with much show of right, that the elder had obtained the lease of the house by falsely representing that it was to be used as a bookstore. Later, however, the landlord had become agreeable, and Mr. Sites had no apprehension of trouble now.

He did not know, nor did the shopkeepers and working people with whom he talked, that the literary guild of the city, with the approval and sympathy of the Prefect and other officials, had sworn to abuse and put out of the city any foreign missionary who came preaching the " Jesus doctrine "; and that a preconcerted and carefully organized plan was now on foot to bring a band of notorious assassins from an adjoining town to carry out their purpose.

He arrived on a Wednesday; and the following days were spent in the usual meetings with preachers. Saturday morning they rose to find abusive and threatening placards on a wall opposite the church, calling on the people to assemble the next day and bind, beat and cast out the foreigner and his " foreign vassals," and then raise a sum of money to redeem the church property and restore it to its owner. That morning, in view of these threatening placards, Dr. Sites went to the Magistrate's office in person to request that they be taken down. The answer was that the placards should be taken down, but that

there must not be any public service in the chapel on Sunday; and it was so agreed.

On Sunday morning, a few Christians met in the parsonage, read the Bible and prayed, but did not sing or have any formal worship; during this time a few people came peering in, looking about in a bold and aggressive way. Toward noon, Mr. Sites walked out upon the hills. In about an hour he returned, but on approaching the chapel he saw several ugly looking persons standing around it as if meditating mischief. Thinking his presence there just then might lead to a disturbance, he turned and walked up another street, meeting several person of the middle class to whom he had sold books on the previous day. They greeted him pleasantly and joined in casual conversation; there was evidently no disposition to rudeness from any one in that quarter.

Returning again toward the chapel, he saw it surrounded by a large and excited crowd of men, all dressed in a uniform of black. Just as he saw this mob they saw him, and raising a shout they ran hooting toward him. Dr. Sites had a hope that he might reach the Magistrate's house, less than half a mile distant. But his pursuers were soon close upon him with clubs and stones. There were no shops in this street; but he pushed through the doorway of what seemed to be a residence, hoping to gain protection. Unfortunately it was old and broken-down inside and if any people were living in it they hid themselves in inner rooms. The rioters pushed in on all sides.

He was struck over the head, in the face, and about the body. One fiend, with a sharp, two-pronged, hardwood fork, thrust him in the face, aiming to put out his eyes, cutting a cruel gash under each eye.

At this time Mr. Sites thought his eyes were indeed out; though blinded by the stunning blows and the blood, he broke out of the house and through the crowd for some distance, when he was quite surrounded and lifted off his feet, thrown upon his face upon the pavement, his boots pulled off, his feet tied with a rope. Then, after a hard struggle, they wrenched his arms from where he had them clasped under his chest, and tied them behind his back. Up to this time he had struggled hard in self-defence. Now he was powerless, lying with his face towards the stone pavement. He merely moved his face a few inches out of the pool of blood which had flowed from the wounds below his eyes. He felt an assurance that God had not forsaken him, while every breath was a silent prayer that deliverance might come.

The noisy crowd discussed;—"What next?" Some said, "He is dead already"; others said, "Let us pelt him with stones"; and others, "Drag him out of the city and throw him in the river." Lying thus for a brief space, he now knew from what the ruffians were saying that an officer was approaching, but he thought it was safer to make believe he was about dead, so did not stir. Soon the officer arrived in his official

chair with a squad of unarmed soldiers; he surveyed the scene and in a leisurely manner ordered the missionary's hands and feet to be untied. Some one picked up a piece of his old broadcloth coat, which had been torn to pieces, and covered his bruised and bleeding face.

The rabble now broke away, and made a rush again for the chapel and parsonage, which they entered. Fortunately, the preachers, expecting this, had already removed their families and most of their effects by a back way and secreted them with friendly neighbors; and no native Christian was injured.

The officer and soldiers, after much delay and noisy talk, procured a sedan chair and bearers. Mr. Sites was lifted into it, and they carried him, he knew not where, but supposed toward the Magistrate's headquarters.

The chair was finally put down; the officer talked loudly and made much bluster; the soldiers joined in and there was a great uproar. Still he sat in his chair, seeing nothing. Then he heard the voice of the preacher, who, on seeing him, broke into tears and sobs. Asking where he was, he found, to his surprise, that they had brought him to the chapel. Kindly hands assisted him upstairs to where his room and bed had been. Everything was gone.

For a moment he was in despair at the thought of his helpless condition, and without bedding or change of clothes. Then he heard his cook-boy say:

" Teacher, everything is safe."

The faithful fellow had, on the first appearance of danger, gathered everything into his traveling baskets and fled with them to friendly shelter. He now brought all back and arranged the bed, washed the blood from Dr. Sites' face, but was unable to make much change in his clothes or tend his bruises. The Christians were devoted in their service; all night long some one sat by his bedside bathing the wounds with cold water.

Next morning, three of the highest officials came to condole with him, and express their regrets. They hired one of the closest and best of boats, and detailed an under officer and a guard of ten soldiers to escort him home to Foochow. The cook-boy continued the cold water treatment, never permitting the cloths on the wounds to dry, during the forty-eight hours of their journey down river.

Arriving at the landing, the faithful boy came to call a chair and to prepare us somewhat for the news. I was not expecting Mr. Sites until the day before Christmas, about a week later. I was standing in the study talking with some one when the boy entered looking deathly pale. I exclaimed:

" Where is Teacher Siek? "

" In the boat."

" Is he sick? "

" No, he is hurt a little."

I cannot rehearse what followed.

When Dr. Osgood had examined his eyes, he

said one would soon be all right, but the other was inflamed and would need time. A little later the American Consul called. After recounting the story to him Mr. Sites added:

"But my Bible teaches me to bless them that curse me and pray for them that despitefully use me, and I want to go back to Yenping as soon as I am well, if I may thereby help to save the people."

Two years later the sequel begins. In the Journal record of another long itinerary, he writes:

Of course to the Mission and to the United States Consul my visit to Yenping was the important point of interest. They suspected that I might go there on this tour, as my return trip would bring me by the gates, wherein no foreign missionary had entered since I was the passive recipient of attention from high and low officials as they escorted me out that memorable morning. And now Yenping being in my appointed work, to enter or not to enter when passing was for God's guiding hand to direct.

After spending two weeks in the cities beyond and about it, I now ventured to anchor outside the gates of this forbidden city. I at once sent a messenger to the chapel, and in half an hour our faithful preacher was by my side in the boat. We carefully and prayerfully talked over the question and then we entered the great gate of the city. We went direct to the office of the high-

est official (Tao-tai), who was appointed here when the former one was removed after the riot. He did not appear, but asked through his secretary who we were and what our purpose. He then requested us to go and report to the Prefect. This was what I did not like to do.

This Prefect is the same one who was acting in that office when the riot occurred and who doubtless encouraged the outburst of cruelty and rage which fell upon me that day. No wonder I doubted the propriety of again placing myself in his tender mercies. Doubting, yet going on, we were soon at a street corner where we must go to or return from the *yamen*. Just then all doubt vanished and we went boldly forward and entered. I sent in my card. Unusual dispatch marked all the preliminaries, and few inquiries were made. They knew me now. No one asked for my passport.

I was invited to enter the reception room, and soon his excellency entered in full official dress, with smiles and bows. We were seated in order. A few remarks followed as to the cities I had just been visiting. When I told him I wished to remain in the city over the Sabbath, he ordered three reliable constables to see that all was quiet and no insults offered me from the children. He assured me that the people were well disposed; that under his careful ruling hand no disturbance should occur; that by treaty agreement the American and Chinese people are as one family. He then spoke of the unfortunate occurrence of my

last visit and expressed deepest regret that he had not known earlier of my presence in the city, that he might have provided for my protection. I pointed to the marks of the wounds on my face, and I assured him that the good hand of God had kept me from death and had restored my wounds and my eyesight. He expressed surprise at the remarkable healing, and many regrets and apologies that such a calamity had ever occurred.

When we had sipped our tea, he escorted me to the second gateway, where he shook hands and we parted.

The constables were fine gentlemanly fellows. They went with us to the boat to get my baskets of bedding, and then through the streets nearly the whole length of the city to our chapel, without any more excitement than if on the streets of Foochow. Before long I was on my knees in that same upper chamber in thanksgiving to God, where two years ago I lay with wounded face and blinded eyes.

One of the three constables had been a member of the guard posted at the chapel on the night following the riot. He remembered, he said, hearing the wounded missionary that night, utter words like these: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

At last we know the meaning of the name of this City of Lingering Peace. Peace lingered long in the coming, 'tis true, but, having come, it abides. It is a peace which, like the river, abides, yet flows, bringing ever larger blessing to all its borders.

Nathan Sites Memorial Academy, Yen-ping.

XXX

BROKEN MELODY

THE years moved on, bringing many new things, both in the development of the Church and in our home nest. Our lives were very busy. Then the dear, cheery letters from the children, so faithfully and lovingly written, coming to us in every mail, were such bright spots to look forward to! Mails came now once a month and we counted ourselves fortunate. They brought news of work and of play, of busy study hours in high school, of promotions from grade to grade, of examinations and marks and contests in which there was disappointment or victory.

Little daughter Belle was in her eighteenth year. She had completed her high school course. Kind friends who appreciated her faithfulness and her progress in school, as well as her beautiful Christian life, already dedicated to God and work for China, had made it possible for her to enter Wellesley College.

Mr. and Mrs. Durant, who, only a few years earlier, had founded Wellesley and infused into it a strong missionary interest, offered her special advantages, and took a parental interest in

her. She was open-hearted and unaffected and withal of a sweet, sunshiny disposition. Naturally, in consequence of travel and much association with older people, she seemed rather more mature than most girls of her age. Then the peculiar conditions of her life, the long and distant separation from her parents, caused her to be noticed and taken into the hearts of Christian teachers with helpful and sympathetic interest; while the young girl so believed in her parents and their work that when their letters came her joy and enthusiasm bubbled over and she shared them with classmates and loved teachers.

She had come to the end of her Freshman year. The commencement season was a delightful novelty. To see so many beautiful functions! Such merriment and fun among the students! The commencement guests had been assigned, in squads of five or six, to different students to be shown through the buildings. We must know the names of those she had the honor to escort, and bits of the conversation which went on as they passed from room to room. It was a long, sweet letter, that "commencement letter," just such a letter as she might have written if she had known it was to be her last. As we read, our tears fell. We were so happy and so humbled and thankful. Among other things, in response to an incident her father had written her some months before,—some hardship he had met with in the work—she said:

"Papa dear, don't you get discouraged. It will be only a little time until I come to help you."

This letter arrived at Foochow about the middle of August. A few days later, to escape the summer heat we went to Sharp Peak on the seashore at the mouth of the Min. A long stone bungalow had by this time been erected there for the use of our Mission families. We had been there only two or three days when, just as we were at dinner at one end of the long veranda, our small messenger boat was reported. The brother beloved who with his family was occupying the other end of the house, jumped up to distribute the mail. Almost immediately he called:

"Brother Sites, come over here."

I saw that his face bore a look of distress. As he turned back, my husband hastened to join him. I thought of three of our boarding-school girls who, a week before, had been married to theological students and had started up the river Min. They would necessarily encounter dangerous rapids. Perhaps there might be news of disaster to them. Then I caught the sight of my husband's face, ashy pale, his dazed look and that unmistakable bit of yellow paper in his hand. I rushed towards him.

"Which is it?" I cried.

His lips could not readily frame the name. Seeing my need of support, he put his arm around me as he answered:

"Belle."

Together we looked at the hard, cold words, "*Your daughter is dead!*"

A cable message from the homeland, conveying such an unexpected and paralyzing announcement, can neither be imagined nor described. After the days of our first immoderate grief, we allowed the Comforter to come to us, assuring us of what we had known but could not realize through our hot, blinding tears, and saying to us, "Your precious one is with Jesus; the ravages of death are only upon the body. Those dear eyes which never looked aught but love upon you, now see the King in His beauty. She will nevermore know toil or tears; no more days of longing and nights of care as she thinks and prays for you so far away. Her wish to work for Christ among heathen women and children is accepted for the deed; she is lifted away from it all, forever safe, forever with the Lord."

Thus we thought and thus we talked, and such humbled rest and consolation came into our hearts as was not granted to us six years before when we ploughed those boisterous waves of the Pacific, leaving our darlings alone in this wide world.

The expressions of sympathy from native Christian friends were most touching. Said one, "There is no comfort but God's comfort." Said another, "Jesus loved her and would spare her from this world's sorrows."

Many weeks must pass before letters with explanations or particulars could come to us. I wanted to get away to some place where we might

talk and weep alone. There were no "own folks" to go to. We closed our house and went one hundred miles, first on the river, then overland to the new Oldfield chapel, with its now cozy parsonage rooms. We spent a few days visiting two of the four girls who had been married from our boarding school all at the same time, two years before. They were now doing good work with their husbands in this district. Each of the young matrons had an interesting day school of little girls, while their Sunday afternoons were given to teaching the church mothers and sisters.

The first evening spent there the preaching hall was crowded with men and Mrs. Muoi Sieng's bedroom with women until a late hour. When she was married we had presented her with a little cabinet organ, which now stood across the corner of her room and made such music as had never before been heard within those walls. While she sang, the mothers vied with each other in the privilege of holding and amusing her pretty baby boy.

I met that evening a very interesting little woman, whose face so pale, so shadowy, showed traces of tears. She greeted me affectionately and Muoi Sieng said of her:

"She is very sorrowful; she is dying of grief. We will talk about it when we have leisure. She has lately buried two little boys."

I thought, "Now surely if I tell her how Jesus comforts me in my great sorrow, she will believe that I understand and will trust the same Jesus

with her little ones, and be comforted too." But when I found her in a quiet corner and tried to tell her of our sweet daughter, taken from us when we were not with her, and how the news was carried to us by a lightning flash, which smote us to the ground; then how Jesus stood by to lift us up and dry our tears with such sweet words of promise, she gave a look in which deep understanding was mingled with despair.

"Oh, yes," she said, "I know that. I do not sorrow for my children; I know they are safe with Jesus. I am glad they are safe in Heaven. I mourn for the living. My husband uses opium and spends everything he earns and more, too. My father-in-law smokes opium and will steal anything, even his neighbor's coat, and give it in exchange for that curse of our home. I have prayed for them and pleaded with them to come and let Jesus save them, but they only go farther and farther into sin." Then in a flood of tears she cried, "Oh, what shall I do?"

After three or four weeks we returned to Foochow to find piles of letters from friends everywhere. They sought in words of loving sympathy to tell us where comfort could be found. We had found it already, off among the hills, in carrying balm to souls in deeper sorrow than ours could ever be.

White Pagoda and Temple Hill,—Scene of battle, 1911.

THE TRIUMPH SONG

"Oh Love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill and field and river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever."

TENNYSON.

XXXI

YOUNG MEN FOR WAR

RUMOR was rife on the college quadrangle one November day in 1911. A special meeting of the Faculty had resulted in the posting of the extraordinary announcement that any student so desiring would be excused. What did it mean? This: that the leaders of the revolutionary movement in Foochow had determined to open fire on the Manchu garrison at daylight next morning. They had courteously advised the college president and other foreigners of their intentions; hence the students were given full freedom of action.

Some would be in the ranks, others would be on guard duty, still others would serve in the Red Cross Ambulance Corps, and some were needed at home.

Squads of young men in uniform were soon on the road leading to the revolutionist headquarters. For six months "The Students' Athletic Association," an organization quite outside of college authority, had been drilling, with guns, out of school hours of course. For some weeks the echoes of the revolution in the north had been growing louder and more insistent. Now the day had come; to-morrow they would fight.

And fight they did. One college student, a Freshman, was among the first to fall. He was an earnest Christian, the only son of his mother, and she a widow. His grandmother, once a worshipper of idols, now a willing worker in women's classes, lately told me how Teacher Sites' exhortations, long ago, helped her to the light. At the memorial services to celebrate the valor of this young man, mother and grandmother occupied seats of honor and heard the Governor-General of the province and other officials, civil and military, tell how much the new Republic owed to the work of Christian education.

Was it only empty eulogy? Hardly. When, a little later, the student volunteers who were quartered in the great temple outside the east gate of Foochow smashed the idols, big and little, and cast their fragments into the street, was it only a boyish prank? No. Listen. One day toward the end of January a battalion of Foochow students was embarking for the north to join in the advance on Peking. There were three hundred and fifty of them, from government schools and mission colleges. A teacher in the Anglo-Chinese College, who was on the jetty to see them off, asked one of his old boys: "Have you many Christians in your battalion?" "Yes," was the answer, "about one-fourth of us are Christians; and we have prayers every night."

Not long after that scene of volunteering, there was another in the college chapel. This was for a cause in which American professors were free

to take part; but the speaker was a Chinese saint. It was the last day of the week of prayer in the college. The message was a call to service. "You answered the call of your country," he said; "now it is for you to make your country worth saving. How many here are willing to listen to the call of God to go out among your own people and preach a gospel which delivers men?" Full half a hundred responded. From them will be recruited trained leaders in the greater revolution of China's spiritual and social order.

In a way, that hour was the fruition of the work of thirty years. I think the men who helped to lay the foundations of the college must have looked down with joy into these illumined faces eager for the new crusade. Above the chapel platform is a beautiful memorial window to one of them, with the words in Chinese: "The Cross my only Glory." Here, then, were to be conjoined the culture of the schools and the power of the Cross.

The founding of the Anglo-Chinese College at Foochow in 1881 involved a new departure. It was the first of its type. Mission colleges in China were few. The teaching of English in mission schools was almost unheard of; and when it was discussed it was generally disapproved by mission authorities. But in this case the enterprise was a part of the returns made by the native church to the parent church.

The initiative was taken by the Chinese, espe-

cially by the preachers. After the organization of the Foochow Conference, Bishop Wiley had reported thus upon the native ministry: "The elder of these ministers, now the leaders in the conference, have devoted themselves exclusively to the preaching of the gospel to their people, and organizing and superintending the churches; so they have had no time for acquiring the language of the missionaries. But they know their own language, their country, their people, their history, their classics and their philosophy; and they know, as we cannot know, the strength of superstition and the degrading influence of idolatry. They know, too, the bigotry of their nation, and the power of that bigotry as it confronts them on every side. It is not strange that these men are the staunchest friends of education, and are longing and laboring earnestly to build up institutions of learning in connection with the Church."

Latterly the older preachers had begun to seek the co-operation of the Mission in making due provision for the higher education of their children. You remember their appeal for the teaching of the classics to their girls. Old China's pulse was beating quicker. Without doubt a new era was coming. Would it be possible for them to prepare their sons, under Christian auspices, for usefulness and position in the New China?

Just at this time a series of providences, a working together of circumstances, led the small Mission force to the conviction: "Now is the time

and here is the place to establish an Anglo-Chinese College." To found English-speaking schools—says the Journal—has never been our object; but the time has come for the recognition of the English language in our Mission. The spread of the gospel has created a demand for higher educational facilities, and God has raised up native help just at the opportune time. We have now offered to us a gift of ten thousand dollars from a Chinese merchant, to found a Christian college in which both Chinese and English shall be taught.

Mr. Diong Ahok, the generous giver, starting out in life a penniless lad, was at this time the head of a prosperous mercantile firm. Best of all, while meditating this magnanimous proposition, he gave his heart to God and his name as a member of the Church. His keen business sense told him the great advantage of modern education for the youth of China, and he wanted them to get training of character as well. His love for the Chinese preachers made him especially desirous to provide good educational facilities for their bright boys.

By the terms of the gift, the ten thousand dollars was to be applied to the purchase of a piece of property, comprising about two acres, lying adjacent to our mission compound, on an elevated slope. Upon this stood, and still stands, a spacious two-story mansion, well-built and in excellent repair. It had been built, and occupied for some years, by a London banking firm. The site

commands a superb view of the river Min, and beyond it the suburbs and city of Foochow, stretching away five miles to the north. Grassy lawns, flowers and dwarf evergreens adorned the grounds, besides a majestic banyan and some stately pines. This entire property was now offered to the Mission as the site of an Anglo-Chinese College.

Prompt action on the offer was imperative. Chinese finance is an uncertain quantity. Generous impulses are often at the mercy of sudden changes in family or business circumstances.

It happened that there were then on the field only three missionaries of our Board: Sites, Ohlinger and Chandler. They were not only ten thousand miles distant, but a year in time, from effectual consultation with headquarters in New York. If Mr. Ahok's offer were laid over for a year, no one could foresee what his business circumstances would be; besides, the property was now available and must be secured at once. This necessitated the creation of a Board of Trustees and the adoption of a form of constitution under which they should hold office. Thus was the Mission led on from step to step. Having satisfied their own minds that the thing ought to be done, and done now, their only course was to act, and take the responsibility of showing that their action was right. They first accepted the proposal and then sought the parental blessing.

In reporting what they had done, they asked for two men to be sent out to take up this college work at once. They also forwarded to the General Missionary Committee for approval the Constitution adopted and a clear statement of the steps that had been taken, and the principles on which the college was founded. In the meantime, the enterprise was launched with Rev. Franklin Ohlinger as president. Wisely and well he guided the new venture through the breakers. As there were only three missionary families of us and no natives who could speak or read English, we all tried to help a little. I remember one morning running over to see Mrs. Ohlinger and her three-weeks-old baby. I found her sitting-room had become a classroom; while reclining on a couch she taught a long row of happy youths to read and spell. She apologized, saying she was only substituting while her husband was giving a lecture in the theological school. In the present halcyon days of the Anglo-Chinese College the vicissitudes of its beginnings are likely to be forgotten.

The logic of the situation was convincing, and our authorities at home accepted full responsibility. Rev. George B. Smythe was sent out especially for the college and was appointed president. "I would that the whole Church could see," he wrote back, "what splendid opportunities this work presents, how many through it are reached who otherwise were forever inaccessible. This college is a Christian opportunity. The Christian

Chinese who founded it was assuredly raised up by God for this enterprise."

The generous founder later added a gift of four thousand dollars. He was, of course, greatly interested in the success of the college, and often came from his home in the early morning that he might be present with the students at the chapel service; he sometimes led in prayer and often talked familiarly with the young men, urging them to diligence in study and to careful obedience to the rules. Often, as he passed, he would drop in quite informally to breakfast with us.

Mr. Ahok was a notable type of the open-minded, open-hearted Chinese gentleman. His palatial native house was open to his missionary friends and to any whom they introduced, and his lavish hospitality made memorable the visit to Foochow of many a friendly tourist. The mansion consisted of a series of three distinct houses of exactly the same design but each in succession more ornate, with larger mirrors, more elaborate fixtures, deeper carved ebony furniture and more exquisite hangings than the one preceding it. Each was built around the four sides of an open square, in which stood symmetrically arranged rows of rare potted plants according to the season, and queer dwarfed shrubs trained into grotesque figures of beasts and birds and native junks. In the third and most beautiful house, many foreigners tasted for the first time sharks' fins, birds' nest soup and the countless other

dainties for which a Chinese banquet is famous, served in finest China, with ivory chopsticks and golden spoons.

Mrs. Ahok was as broad of view as her husband; indeed, along literary lines, she was far in advance of him, having been one among the limited number of Chinese girls taught to read and write. Like the late Empress Dowager, she was of artistic tastes and scholarly mind. She had mastered the famous classics of her country, and read much of its history, poetry and literature. Whether in her European drawing-room or Chinese reception hall, she was always the charming and graceful hostess. Gowned in the choicest silks and brocades, and supported on the arm of her maid, she could step daintily forth on her tiny bound feet, to greet one guest after another. She and her good husband were both given to hospitality, and never seemed happier themselves than when making others happy.

Some people say: China has rich men; why send teachers and establish mission colleges? Others say: Only the poorest of the people become Christians. China has, indeed, many well-to-do men. Of such men, more than one have become followers of the Christ and benefactors of their countrymen. But China's rich men, like China's rich mountains, still, for the most part, await the touch of the Master who will transmute their wealth into blessing to China and to the world. In the founding of the Anglo-Chinese

College the Church gained a new point of contact with rich men and young men, men who are the strength of China to-day and will be her rulers to-morrow.

Transportation in China.

XXXII

HOME FROM THE FRONT

HAPPY is the traveler who comes to a study of one oriental country with the equipment of long residence in another. India and Egypt, with their utterly oriental populations and their enlightened western administrative systems, are apt object-lessons for China. So thought Mr. Sites, when in 1884, returning to America as delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he enjoyed his first visit to Southern Asia and the Levant.

In the Straits Settlements the Chinese are, in fact, the predominant element in the population. Many among them have amassed wealth and live in princely style. At Penang Mr. Sites was entertained by one such merchant prince, whose family had emigrated from Foochow a generation or two before. At Malacca are memorials of some of the early English missionaries to China who began their work among the Chinese here along the Malacca straits.

At Calcutta the traveler is shown, in the gardens of the Government House, a group of cannon which were cast in China and have Chinese characters on them. The tablet in front records with

characteristic British modesty that they were taken from the Chinese in 1842 and brought here to commemorate the peace dictated to the Chinese government under the walls of Nanking.

Our traveler finds his old friend Scott in the very heart of India and together they visit famous shrines while they live over their old college days. In a Hindoo temple by the Ganges he comes upon a Buddhist idol with a Chinese name! He brings home a brick from the topee where Buddha himself taught, just outside of that hot-bed of Hinduism, Benares.

In the tea district of Darjeeling he meets a well-to-do Chinese Christian, whose grandfather was fetched over from China to teach the Indians to cultivate tea. He looks over into Thibet, a part of China, and buys a well-worn prayer-wheel from a pilgrim lama.

In Egypt and Palestine he studies the records of the dust and traces the footsteps of Moses and the prophets. To his brothers in China, who love the flavor of reality, he will carry back the real Presence from many a spot where once the Prophet of Nazareth walked. He visits the Garden Tomb on the knoll which has been identified as the true Calvary, by Chinese Gordon. He is a good observer, bringing much knowledge to each new scene and carrying more away.

Like Confucius, he asks questions about everything. Like the great Teacher, his chief interest everywhere is men, and men of every race become his brothers. On the summit of Olivet he finds

the universal prayer inscribed on thirty-two marble slabs in as many different languages; one of them is his loved Chinese.

At Beirut he makes a pilgrimage to the grave of Bishop Kingsley, who died here before ever he reached home after that memorable visitation to Foochow, when he cast his mantle on the Seven. The Syrian Protestant College at Beirut with its superb equipment, and Robert College at Constantinople with its fruitful output of enlightened patriots, both stir his ambition for greater things for the young college yonder in China.

The traveler entered New York harbor on a stately steamer, just where our clipper ship had sailed out twenty-three years before. In the interval an infant church had come of age. In the community to which he went out, the Christians numbered scarcely more than one hundred, with no native ministry. He now came as the elected delegate from a body of forty ordained ministers, serving a membership of some four thousand. He had served his apprenticeship. After Conference he attended commencement exercises at old Delaware and found himself, to his surprise, a Doctor of Divinity, by authority of his Alma Mater.

XXXIII

PEACE HATH HER VICTORIES

FOR many years there had been good work and steady growth on the part of the Church among the people of a rugged little island, Hai Tang by name, lying off the coast from Foochow. It has a population of some sixty thousand. Several preaching places had already been established and the people had been generally friendly.

In the principal town of the island a small house and lot had been bought for use as chapel and parsonage. A dispute had arisen between the populace and the church members over the right to the use of certain land in front of the church. Moreover, a modest second story had been built on the parsonage adjoining, and this was denounced as a deadly affront to the spirits of the air.

The local Magistrate seemed hostile to the Church and his attitude encouraged the people to violence. One day the chapel was attacked; windows were smashed and roof-tiles broken up. Only after time for considerable mischief had elapsed did the Magistrate come forth with due dignity and advise the people to go to their homes.

The case went up to the American Consul and the provincial officials at Foochow. After much correspondence the issues were more involved than ever. Meanwhile the Christians on the island were being terrorized and pleaded for protection. In his perplexity the Consul turned to Mr. Sites.

Mr. Sites had now rounded out thirty years in China. He held the confidence of both officials and people. With the approval of the Mission he accepted the appointment of Deputy Consul and proceeded to Hai Tang, taking with him as secretary a well-known literary man from Clearwater.

By this time the trouble making Magistrate had been suspended. The new Magistrate, who had been appointed to conduct negotiations for a settlement, proved to be a keen, intelligent, wide-awake lawyer with a fine sense of justice. With almost American directness—says the Journal—he went straight to the essential questions. After an inspection of the fateful second-story room he pronounced it unobjectionable and promised it to us unmolested. In the matter of our boundary line it was agreed that the testimony of the original landowner and all the thirteen Elders of the city wards should decide. They were called; they were unanimous that all land beyond the very corner of our chapel was public property; so we at once resigned all right to it, and promised to remove the offending wall which the church people had built across it. The entire community

was pleased at this; and the Magistrate issued a proclamation which was posted throughout the city, that, owing to the indefinite wording of the deed of sale, the wall had been built without intention of usurpation on the part of the Christians. He also ordered to be erected two large stone tablets, one on either side of the chapel entrance, setting forth the same fact and forbidding any future annoyance which might seem to make a protecting wall necessary.

I stated, on behalf of the Christians, that (because) we believed the riot had been instigated primarily by the former Magistrate and was not due to any positive unkindness on the part of the people; therefore we wished no indemnity extorted from the citizens, nor would we bring charges against any of them. But we requested that the former Magistrate should be required to furnish workmen, and repair all damages.

Many points of law demanded attention; eight interviews were held with the Magistrate, besides nine exchanges of correspondence. When all was settled, he made out a report for his superior officials in Foochow, submitted it to me for criticism, and accepted all the modifications we suggested.

The people at large seemed touched by the magnanimous settlement of the case, which, while requiring justice, was considerate of them. To express their gratitude, the thirteen city Elders arranged to come to our chapel and apologize publicly for the wrong their people had done us.

Such a ceremony is of deep significance to the Chinese and was regarded by them as the climax to our victory. These City Fathers, ranging from fifty to seventy-five years of age, came to the chapel, dressed in rich ceremonial robes and wearing red tasselled Mandarin hats. They were accompanied by the military band, the best the island could boast. We were in readiness to receive them, and returned their low bows as they entered. On the table they placed a pair of big red candles, and lighted them. This was a sign of reverence. At the same time a fusillade of firecrackers on the open square in front announced to the city that harmony was restored.

They sipped tea and smoked the pipe of peace, while their spokesman made a speech of apology, promising so to instruct the younger citizens that hereafter there should never be trouble, but perpetual peace and good will with the Christians.

Before leaving, they unfolded and hung above our chapel doorway an immense banner of red bunting, two and a half feet wide and fifteen feet long. Across the centre were four large gilt characters meaning "Chinese and Foreigners are of One Heart." In smaller gilt characters, at the right: "Tendered to the courteous glance of the American Missionary, Doctor Sites"; and at the left, in small characters, "Presented by the united body of the Elders of the City, with their deepest respect."

Our Christians had been so alarmed by the sudden danger in which they had found them-

selves that it was difficult to calm and reassure them. But frequent and earnest prayer with them, accompanied by careful study and practical application of God's Word, had largely accomplished this; and now the public apology dispelled their doubts and fears.

We had spent twelve hard, hot days at it, and our work was finished. But a message now came from the Magistrate urging us, our business having been completed, to remain for a few days of rest and recreation. This we well knew would involve on his part a costly banquet for us. The City Fathers now also sent word asking the privilege of preparing us a feast and holding a theatrical performance for our entertainment in the open square before our chapel. All these we declined, not caring to place ourselves or the church members under obligation to them; and, in order to avoid being coerced into acceptance, we left at half-past five the next morning, notwithstanding it was the Sabbath.

Before leaving, in the freshness of the morning, we held a blessed service of prayer with the little group of church members. Then we proceeded to the next chapel and held preaching services. So we went on, preaching in our chapels at four places during the day. After the last service, which was at the seaport, I was told that a boat was starting for the mainland. The wind being favorable, and feeling that this, too, was the Lord's leading, we took passage. These boats are only small, open sailboats, which provide no

comforts and little safety, but are the only means of transport. In our case the elements were favorable and our trip across was made in a few hours. We arrived in time for an evening meeting at our chapel in the landing town, and spent the night there. Another hot day overland and half the night by river boat brought us home.

My heart says, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" How blessedly has been fulfilled His promise, "Lo, I am with you alway." Before Magistrates, in the face of an angry population, answering vexed questions and solving portentous problems, He the Lord of Hosts has been with us and with His Church on the little ocean-bound island. To-day our cause is in better repute and our workers have more opportunities than ever before. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

XXXIV

AN OVERTONE

A NATIVE Chinese elected delegate to the General Conference! This was the message flashed home from Foochow. Now for the first time the Methodist Episcopal Church in China was to be represented in its highest councils by one of its own ministers. You who have followed my story will not be surprised to learn that the man chosen by his brethren for this high honor was our old friend, Elder Sia.

The Christian scholar had been developing more and more, as the years passed, in qualities of leadership. Always modest and unassuming, he was also ready to take responsibilities. This was well illustrated when he became pastor of the great central church at Foochow. Most of the missionaries who are engaged in school and hospital work at Foochow attend there, and plans for special services had usually been left to their initiative. But Pastor Sia, immediately after his first quarterly meeting on that charge, began revival services. The results were marked, especially in decisions for Christ on the part of students in the college and in the girls' boarding school. On one Sunday morning his theme was,

Dr Siu.

"Christ, the Living Bread." Vividly he illustrated China's spiritual condition by comparing it with the horrors of the North China famine, when men ate uneatable things. Starving China, he said, was eating, that is worshipping, the dead men of the past; but now Christ, the satisfying portion, had come! It was a wonderful sermon and strangely moved the people.

From the day of his conversion there had been no more doubt in the mind of Teacher Sia than there was in the mind of Saul of Tarsus, that discipleship meant apostleship. In the early years, as you will remember, he went often on extended itineraries with Mr. Sites. A favorite companion on these evangelistic journeyings was Lee, the quondam blacksmith of Oxvale, whose nightly holding forth of the Word of Truth in discussion with Teacher Sia, in their little upstairs bedroom, had been a potent factor in bringing the man of letters into the light. These two men, the scholar and the blacksmith, made a strong preaching team. On the day when the scholar was ordained elder in the Church the blacksmith was ordained deacon. Three years later, when the annual meeting had convened under clouds of anxiety, in the face of threatened secessions, apparent failure of the self-support principle and open rebellion against church authority on the part of one of the elders, it was in the preaching of the consecration sermon by Sia Sek Ong that the Holy Spirit fell in power upon the whole assembly, melting all hearts with

refining fire, moulding wills into heroic resolve to reck not of silver but of souls, and bringing the recalcitrant elder in penitence to the altar. Then it was Lee who rose, as if by the common consent of his brethren, to voice their spirit of complete consecration. I well remember his figure as he stood up in the midst of the kneeling band and slowly and solemnly spoke as if for all, while his face shone with heaven's own light: "These hands and feet are henceforth the Lord's; these eyes, ears, tongue, mind, soul, all, all henceforth and forever, the Lord's."

During these years, Teacher Sia's pen had continued busy. All the splendid literary equipment of the Confucianist scholar was placed on the altar of his new faith and love. A tract of his, entitled "Who is Jesus?" is still one of the classics of Chinese Christian literature. At one time he won a prize offered for the best essay on Chinese marriage and burial customs, the competition for which was open to all China. In the early days, with Mr. Sia as his assistant and writer, Mr. Sites had translated a number of Wesley's sermons, many of which were published. For many years he was either assistant or principal in the theological school, where his literary culture and his deep spiritual fervor united to make his influence most marked upon the rising generation of preachers.

In America Mr. Sia made a profound impression by his breadth of mind, noble bearing and spiritual power. His sermons and addresses were

interpreted nearly always by Mr. Sites, who had accompanied him across the sea. Religious newspapers compared him to St. Paul. Some said he would make "a splendid oriental Bishop." He was characterized as "a true Christian philosopher, a man of the deepest piety and high mental culture." In the course of his tour across the country an American university conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Dr. Sia's interview with President Cleveland in Washington was doubtless a unique incident in both their careers. It was at a period when our Chinese exclusion laws were much more drastic than at present, and Mr. Sites had had much trouble and anxiety in securing permission for the delegate, duly provided with passport as he was, to land at San Francisco. Mr. Sia had endured the inconvenience with his never failing urbanity, and now to the President, as representing the people, he returned gracious thanks for the courtesy with which he had been received in America. "Since landing in your honorable country," he said, "I have been treated with marked courtesy and kindness in every city and state through which I have traveled, and to whom is it more fitting that I should come to offer thanks than to the President of this great nation?

"While visiting the Hall of Representatives and the Senate Chamber yesterday," he continued, "I noticed, in passing through the rotunda, a large painting on the wall representing a company of people on board a ship, kneeling

around an open Bible. On inquiring what it meant I was informed that those people were just setting out for this country to found a new nation. And now in so short a time what wealth and prosperity have flowed in upon you! Has it not sprung from this great fountain of knowledge, the Holy Bible?

"In traveling from San Francisco to Washington I was delighted all along the way with what I saw, and I loved your civilization; but loving still more ardently my own country, China, I desire earnestly that she may soon attain to all the blessings which your people enjoy."

The President said in reply, that it gave him pleasure to receive such expressions of appreciation of our civilization from one who came from an oriental land, and especially from one who had been engaged in the christianizing of his own people. The President declared emphatically that our American civilization rested upon the foundation of Christianity and that it is the only foundation upon which the new civilization of China can with safety be built.

Dr. Sia returned with broader vision to become more than ever a teacher and leader of his own people. Is it not the greatest wonder of the world to note what one man's influence may do for a community? When Teacher Sia became a Christian, there was not another in his native village. When it became known that he had renounced his ancestral idols, the whole village rose in wrath to cast him out. His clan confiscated his

share in the communal property. Thirty years later, as Mr. Sites went throughout all parts, he came to a quarterly meeting of the church in that village. The Journal tells that the chapel was filled to the door with earnest Christians and inquirers, representing all ages, from young catechists to the great-grandfather eighty-three years old; that the Christian leaven seemed to be permeating the whole village; that a mass meeting was recently held in the old village temple for the purpose of forming a kind of mutual protective organization, to prevent the buying or selling of opium, to stop gambling, stealing and other crimes within the town limits; that the thirty-two elders of the village, four of whom are earnest Christians, were constituted a Board of Aldermen, before whom disputes should be brought for adjustment; and that Sia Sek Ong, D.D., was unanimously elected President of this Board of Aldermen. Three times he declined to accept this honor, because of his duties in the Theological school in Foochow; but they would not take "no," and his name stands as honorary president of the board.

From a social point of view the most important difference between a heathen and a Christian land is the difference of moral atmosphere. When Christian ideas and ideals begin to be absorbed unconsciously by children as they are growing up, then there is the beginning of the Christian community. This will be evident to any one who makes a study of any mission field where, for a

generation or longer, there has been a growing native church. The student of Christian sociology will note, for example, in Foochow, that a few family names figure largely in lists of teachers, preachers, and other groups of workers now engaged in various branches of Christian activity. One name much in evidence is the surname Hu; another is Sia. The life of Sia Sek Ong would make a fruitful study in social evolution.

Dr. Sia died in 1897, two years after Mr. Sites, but several years his junior. He had attempted and had achieved great things for God. Without complaint and without a moment's faltering he had endured extraordinary hardships for the faith since that Sunday morning, thirty-four years before, when he stood in our little prayer meeting at Oxvale and pledged loyalty to his new Master. The Galilean had conquered throughout those years,—conquered in many souls and in the life of many communities. How much of the conquest was due to the decision of that hour, who can measure? How large the issues of that hour for China through years yet to come, in the building of men, in the purifying of the Church, in the renewal of society, in the making of the Christian nation that is to be, eternity will tell.

XXXV

THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS

IT was a great day at the House of Lau in the Sixth Township village of Clearwater. The rambling old castle itself had changed but little since the day, just thirty years before, when the missionary was first received within its forbidding walls. Now a whole wing of the ancient castle had been rented and furnished and was to be opened as a women's training school. The pioneer missionary had, a year or two before, been assigned again to this field of his early planting. His daughter Ruth was in charge of the woman's work here, and together they had planned the housing of the school. With foresight, born of experience, Mr. Sites had advised an inspection day in order to forestall suspicion—to avoid any seeming mystery, and that heathen neighbors might satisfy their curiosity as to the whys and wherefors of provision for the education of Chinese women. On the eve, therefore, of the formal opening, neighbors and friends from near and far had been invited to a modestly grand reception and to inspect the arrangements.

With the exception of the native clergy, the

guests were mostly heathen men, including the Mayor and Aldermen and the village Elders. They had come with music and fire-crackers and with gifts of brilliant silk banners inscribed with mottoes expressive of their appreciation of the interest taken by the "Enlightened Christian Teachers" in behalf of their "Benighted woman kind." The successful day was over, and weary but happy the missionary and his daughter sat and talked of their guests who had gone and of the pupils expected on the morrow. Suddenly across the fields along the narrow winding road came, staggering and cursing, one Lau, a desperate opium fiend and a small shareholder in the Castle property,—who felt his portion of rent money insufficient and who wreaked his anger in vile vituperations against the "Foreign Devils." Loudly he beat on the closed gates, demanding admittance, that he might pollute with poison and filth the new deep well of crystal water which the missionary had himself recently supervised the digging and building of, in the school court-yard. Every one else was for barring him out, but Mr. Sites went in person, opened the gates and welcomed the angry guest with utmost courtesy. Half stunned by his unexpectedly kind reception, Mr. Lau permitted himself to be led to a seat, to accept tea and cakes and other signs of hospitality, though he looked with sullen silence into the smiling face of the missionary and listened half-heeding to his kindly words. Could this winsome man, whose arm in brotherly fashion

was resting on his feeble, opium-poisoned frame, be the "Foreign Devil" of whom he had so angrily thought but whom he had never before seen? The long, friendly interview ended.

No poison went into the well, but poison was still in the man. Here was another challenge to the power of the Christ.

The next day, when Mr. Lau approached the foot-bridge to cross the creek for his usual séance in the opium shop, the missionary met him.

"I was thinking of calling on you, Mr. Lau," he said; "would it be convenient for you to come with me to my house?"

There was nothing to do but go back. The same thing happened on several succeeding days. Each day in his private room the missionary knelt with Mr. Lau, and Another was in their midst. The presence became a Power, and one day the slave of opium found himself free. Thereafter arose a saying among the natives that all Dr. Sites had to do was to put his arm over a man's shoulder and that man became a Christian. Telling the story, as he loved to do, after years of faithful discipleship, Mr. Lau was asked:—

"How do you explain it?"

"Man cannot save man," he answered; "but that man walked daily with God and through him came the power of God to me."

Mr. Sites had thrown himself into this new work on old ground with all the zest of pioneer days. Remarkable revival and ingathering had

ensued. In two years the membership had increased sevenfold; and now at the New Year season, a few months after the incident of the woman's school opening, he had planned a week of special meetings in the Sixth Township Church. It was to culminate in the love-feast and Holy Communion service on Sunday. Our daughter Ruth was there to help with the work among the women, and with her was " Mother " Nind, of wide missionary fame. I was at that time in America.

Usually the holiday season is a poor time for meetings, but this week the church was thronged. Each day was filled with opportunities and there were many conversions. It was a week of supreme joy for Mr. Sites. Those who heard him in the services wondered at the power of his prayers and exhortations. Those who were with him in the home felt that even the blessing at table had in it the hush of the holy of holies.

Sunday was the climax of the week. A large class were baptized and received into the Church. Among them were men who a few months before were vile sinners, opium smokers and gamblers, now saved by the power of God. The love-feast was full of rapid, clear testimonies from evidently saved men and women. When one man, regarded as the wickedest in the district, and another, nearly a mate for him in sin, both testified clearly to sins forgiven and joy in believing, Mr. Sites, his face aglow, turned to his daughter and said, " Pretty near heaven, this, isn't it,

dear?" And it was nearer for him than he thought.

Returning, that evening, to their rooms at the old castle, Mr. Sites said: "How many years I spent in seed sowing! But the Lord has been wonderfully good to me. Lately I have been reaping, reaping. What a glad, rich Sabbath day this has been!"

His zeal had consumed him. That night, fever developed. After two days, with no improvement, he was carried by loving hands to a little native boat, in the bottom of which his bedding had been spread, and on this he was gently laid, for his last trip to Foochow. On a great flat rock beside the stream the Christians knelt while the Chinese pastor prayed. "And they all wept sore, sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more." He joined in the earnest Amen which closed the prayer, then lying in the little boat he raised his hands and pronounced the benediction,—his last act of public ministry and fitly closing his life's work. The next Sabbath, at the vesper hour, he fell asleep. The short winter twilight deepened into night; but "he felt upon his fevered brow the breath of the eternal morning."

Among those who rose to speak at the memorial service was a literary man from Clearwater. He said: "We who were often with Teacher Sites during the past year, observed that the more we reminded him of his need of rest, the more assiduously he worked. He kept preaching from

pulpit to pulpit, from village to village, from man to man. Everywhere he lifted up Jesus Christ, and everywhere men were drawn unto Him."

The funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Sia. More than five hundred native Christians followed the coffin to the grave, all dressed in white. This is the Chinese garb of mourning. But they seemed rather to symbolize that welcoming company of the redeemed who are arrayed in white robes, their garb of purity and joy, as they sing the triumph song.

One of the native preachers in the Oldfield district died a few days later, not yet having heard of Mr. Sites' translation. Shortly before his death he lay for some hours in a trance. On awakening from it, he clapped his hands and looking radiantly happy, said to the sorrowing friends who stood about him: "Do not mourn for me. I have seen into heaven. I came near the gate and saw within it a vast company, all clothed in white. The first one I recognized was Teacher Sites. He stepped from among the crowd and grasped both my hands, exclaiming, 'Oh, my brother, I am glad you have come.' Then he led me just inside the gates of that beautiful city; but I came back only to tell you what I had seen and to say good-bye." Thus did Oldfield first hear of the Homegoing of their beloved missionary.

Some years afterward in Yenping I met a noble young preacher by the name of Lau. I asked him if he had ever met Mr. Sites.

Nathan Sites Memorial Good Shepherd Hospital,—Clearwater.

The Mission Cemetery, Foochow.

"Met him!" he cried, his voice trembling with emotion. "Had it not been for him I should be a beggar to-day. It was he who saved my father from opium, away down in Clearwater, years ago."

A few days later, the father, a fine old gentleman, a respected teacher in the boys' school at Clearwater, called to see me. The tenderness with which he spoke of his winning to God was beautiful.

"Some months after Teacher Sites returned to heaven," he said, "I was taken seriously ill. The native doctor said I must take opium or die. 'I will not take it,' I told him; 'I would rather die and meet Teacher Sites in heaven with clean mouth and clean heart!'"

Thus many an humble heart-strain among the sons of men throbs in tune with the heavenly chorus whose music is the gladness of the world.

XXXVI

THE SINGER

IT is a difficult task to analyze the character behind an active life. It may also be needless, when the activities of that life have already been sketched in some detail. But I must try to gather the essential lines of the subject into a miniature. His life was singularly rounded and complete within its sphere. His was an abounding life, like a spring of living water. He was not only—

"Fed from within with all the strength he needs," but his was a life of that self-giving sort:—

> *"Whose waters overflow*
> *To deserts of the soul, long beaten down*
> *By the brute hoof of habit, till they spring*
> *In manifold upheaval to the sun."*

This exuberance of life had a physical basis. He had a thoroughly sound body and he always gave heed to keeping it sound. He ate simply, slept well, rose early. His bath, devotions, and morning walk,—usually including a friendly call,—were all enjoyably achieved before most of the world was astir. His abounding vitality seems

to lend support to a certain modern interpretation of the blessing pronounced upon the meek. They inherit the earth because their inexhaustible energy serves all their own needs and the needs of other people as well. In circumstances where physical comforts were lacking, as is often the case in overland trips in China, it was always he who was able to make things a little pleasanter and easier for others.

His normal weight was about one hundred and seventy-five pounds, his height five feet eleven. Deep-chested, strong-limbed, always erect in bearing, he gave the impression of being a man of much more than ordinary size. His features were regular, his eyes blue. He usually wore a full beard, which, in his last twenty years of service, was touched more and more with gray. This gave him a strong first claim to respect and veneration among the Chinese.

In temperament he was cheerful, affable, giving himself whole-heartedly to his friends. In the presence of what seemed like unfriendliness or disapproval he maintained a certain approachable reserve. I think he might be called an ideal guest. He was certainly so regarded by his Chinese friends, in whose homes he was received, not indeed as a guest, but as a father and brother. Children loved him and clung to him. In his home letters, as in his family life, he showed only his heart of love; but in the privacy of his journal I find, sometimes, sentiments of self-reproach and discouragement at what he conceived to be his

shortcomings in that holiness, the pursuit of which was the dominant impulse of his life.

His mental habits were orderly and definite, like the square and plumb of his carpenter's training. His sermons were carefully prepared and outlined, his English sermons sometimes written out in full. But the records of his meditations—usually in the freshness of the morning—showed best the thorough quality of his thinking. Often in his devotions, and always when working out problems of mission polity, he would record in order the steps by which he came to the height of his argument. Likewise the utmost precision marked his management of church records, treasurer's books and all business matters.

His mind was broadly hospitable to the great world of ideas, but none found permanent lodgment there if it did not serve his master-passion. His work absorbed him. It was evident even in his letters to his family that his thought life was in China. The little companies of believers in quiet valleys and on rugged mountain slopes in China were his brothers and sisters and mothers; and when on furlough in America he was restless to be back on the field.

Said his classmate, Professor Whitlock: "The greatness of his life was to be seen in his Christian character and consecration. These were so marked and vivifying that they seemed to recast and invigorate his whole being. His character was one of great symmetry. To the casual observer there was no marked individuality in any

feature of it, but his friends knew that it had no weak place."

In a characteristic tribute, one of his Chinese fellow-workers said: "When Dr. Sites came to China thirty-four years ago I was not yet born into the Kingdom of God. I soon heard of his work, of his traveling, preaching, and bookselling in villages by the seaside and in remote places. He did not shun the wicked, though he himself was virtuous; he did not fear the vile, though he was pure. People readily came near him, and on first acquaintance even, had confidence in him as a friend and safe adviser. In the far interior, when he found himself in need, away among strangers, people would gladly offer him money to be refunded later on his reaching home. His very tone and manner enlisted confidence and love. The officials knew him and praised him for his humility and his never-failing sense of justice. How patient and forgiving he was! At Yenping when he was mobbed even, many years ago, and his eyes nearly put out, he was nevertheless patient with the evil-doers, and would accept no indemnity for losses. But now his warfare in his Master's name is ended. He sees the King."

XXXVII

CAMP-FIRE

FIFTY years have passed since the coming of the "Cathay." It is the annual love-feast hour. With eye undimmed and form erect despite his superannuate dignity, Elder Yek comes forward to take the leader's chair, as by right of seniority he should. He, the youngest of the Seven, is the only one left of those who first in this Church of the Heavenly Rest took upon them the vows of God. Rising now, he looks out upon the sea of faces before him.

The house of meeting is many times larger than of old, and to-day it is filled to the doors. Men and women are here—leaders fresh from the firing-line—from Oldfield and sea-girt Haitang, from Clearwater and Bonnieburn and the City of Lingering Peace. Hundreds of younger men and women are here, students in Christian schools, who, a few weeks later, are to listen to the first President of the Chinese Republic proclaiming from this same platform the oneness of the aims of the Republic with the ideals of the Church. To-day nineteen are to be ordained to the work of the ministry. Among them are familiar names, and the old man lingers lovingly

On December 18, 1912, while this book was in process of printing, its author, Mrs. S. Moore Sites, having completed her life and labor of love, fell asleep.

As her husband's loyal companion and help-meet throughout his heroic life she was active in many lines of missionary work. Her most lasting impress, however, was through her pen, translating our noblest hymns and enriching with numerous books the native Christian literature.

To her, as a wise, faithful, deeply affectionate mother, her children who mourn her loss pay loving tribute.

on the memories they recall. As if in a dream he speaks.

His words are chiefly of one with whom he used to tour the hills when the followers of the Lamb were but a meagre handful,—of many glad and weary days they spent together seeking out the hearts of men. How rich the findings from that holy quest! How manifold the returns he reaped even here for the giving up of father and mother and children! And if it is given to the spirits of those who have loved us on earth to share the joy of our everyday victory, with what rapture must that High Soul look down to-day upon these gathering hosts of recruits in God's great army, going on to take the world!

THE DOMINANT CHORD

"IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A MAN"

BY

W. S. BISSONNETTE

"IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF A MAN"

IT was a dreary afternoon in February on the island of Haitang. I emerged from the wind-swept waste into a shelter of sand-blown ridges and bush-fringed homesteads, which broke the gray line of the sand-sea. Between sky and sea I cannot imagine a land so lonely, so nakedly and bitterly forlorn; yet I was not lonely, nor had I walked altogether forlorn in the bitter weather along the dimly traced footpaths on that winter day. The black patches huddled on the edge of the plain were villages, centres of cultivation in the stony waste. They stood over against the sand-swells and were fortified by lines of scrubby trees and mounds of gray sea-grass, with outlying fields of bean and wheat flanking with green lines these citadels of life. I climbed a sand-ridge, crossed a bare strip of earth, and broke into the Paradise of Duaibang, a village of deep-hedged lanes, and low-walled fields.

The houses were sheltered in the background. It was quiet in there after the howling wilderness and its raving wind; and I was at a loss to account for a strange sense of isolation in the first few moments. There was a friendship potently present and bracing, out on the barren trail, which seemed about to retreat from the proximity

of a crowd. But not a soul except one was visible. He pointed me silently, with an eloquent thrust of the whole mouth, toward the chapel, which I knew was somewhere about among those lowly habitations of the poor. It found me first, and sent out its full quota of future presidents to escort me into the sacred precincts, which, during the secular week, did useful service as a day school. Thither came en masse the residue of the inhabitants, to welcome and give me the freedom of the city. The village laughed good and long at its honored guest, and then returned leisurely and individually to its legitimate business of loafing—all but the chosen few who had been rescued from the communal paganism, and built into "the church visible."

I unpacked my baskets and went to work. It was the day of the quarterly meeting, and the official members had gathered from the scattered villages of the circuit to report on the spiritual and temporal state of the Kingdom which was in their keeping. They were a group of primitive Christians. I thought of the return of the Twelve, or the Seventy, who once upon a time were sent out to publish the good tidings in hallowed Israel; and of later meetings, in old Jerusalem, when the apostles returned from far journeys to counsel and commune together. In this motley group one might imagine more than a single prototype of those ancient Christians. Would not this stolid countryman, this eager-eyed enthusiast, this dreamy old teacher, this keen-faced ascetic, and

By Lone Sea-breakers.

this bronze-browed fighter, who had weathered years of persecution—would not any of these have found his kindred there among those early seekers of the great and goodly Pearl? On the bench beside me sat one whose queued head was rough and rusty as a cocoanut. Its continuous bobbing and swinging under the smoking lamp seemed to keep time to the staccato debate in which its owner bore a leading part. A seamed face, lighted by a pair of speaking eyes, was thrust backward across his shoulder, and brought to mind a lurking image of rugged Peter before the wistful sweetness of the Spirit had softened his rocky front. There was a dash of salt in his words and manner that whetted curiosity, so after the session had closed I sought him out for a quiet talk.

He was a true sea pearl,—as I soon discovered —much incrusted, indeed, with less glorious stuff, but well worth digging to, for all that. He led me back over the long flinty track of his hard-got life. It had all been lived on the desolate stretch of rock and sand which he called home—his native bit of earth. When the Light-bearers first began to seed this coast with the Living Word, the island people were much engaged in the business of piracy; and it took close and heavy hammering to break the granite surface of their iron-hearted paganism, before the tender Word of God could find soil and shelter. But to this son of the sea it had come in an easier way,—somewhat as the Light of the World must have come to the favored Twelve—in the form of a human friend.

That friend is the subject of this sketch, of whom he spoke many things, waxing more and more glad as they rose in memory. But one thought remains with me now, "He was patient above all men." Then followed an eloquent recital of bygone incidents that proved the gift of patience. The old exhorter placed the emphasis on the right quality. I had not heard it named so insistently before. It gave durance to a set of features as the final pressure of the graver's tool does to a carving.

This was the last stroke needed to complete a picture which my mind had been drawing for nearly a decade. It gave the last outline to a human face whose growing lineaments were emerging into clear distinction, and I felt that I was seeing for the first time a true portrait of the man, upon whose trail I had been treading on that weary day in that desolate landscape. Lying awake on my board bed in the gusty darkness of the stone chapel, I thought, that night, of the one who had been there before me, and who had trod the same stony path through the island desert; had met with some of the same class; heard much the same words from their lips, and had lain in the same place through the wild night years ago. And a vision of many paths, winding their lonely way over a whole province, and all converging at last into one that came to the foot of a cross, wove itself upon the dusking ground of sleep. And if I dreamed at all, my dream was this pattern of a man's footprints turned to gold, and a shining web whose silver wanderings were like the strands

of a net which drew the great dark globe of earth toward a faint celestial coast.

After I began to travel the old trails of the earlier missionaries it was not long before the sense of a fairer fellowship, moving parallel with mine, but in another sphere, began to companion my going. But when and where I began to identify this communion with a single spirit it is impossible to remember. The tradition of a saintly preacher, who bore the name of Nathan Sites, much beloved by all men, is still strong in Foochow and its neighborhood. But this was only the shadow, the nimbus of a head, warmly lingering after the owner had gone. Whatever else was added in the slow process of acquaintance, I know that the idea of goodness was the basis of the creation, and the other features, picked out here and there, as I became aware of them through the years of intercourse with the people he had moulded, were the variants of this first golden holding. He was remembered among them as " the best friend of the Chinese," and " He loved us more than any other," and " His love was from within." But these sayings began to have another meaning when one heard that he was the first of the missionaries to care for their homely food; to eat often at their rough wooden tables; to sleep on their grass matting and cane beds; and to live for weeks and months under their smoky roofs. It was thus that he learned the kindly greeting which is still remembered, " Brother, have you eaten your supper yet? "

Though flat and empty in our English phrase, when rolled out in sonorous Chinese, it was his trumpet call to brotherhood in every friendly group. For him, religion was a partnership with every man who was willing to share life with him. He found that joy in the sharing which belongs to every whole-hearted host in feeding his guest to the full; and he was great enough, too, to share the host's part with them, and to play the true guest to his humble entertainers in more than meat and drink. In those days the faithful itinerant, whose circuit included half a province, was often isolated for months from all intellectual and social companionship of his own kind; his Chinese Bible was his chief source of mental stimulus; and Chinese minds, as bare of thought as the raw hills of clothing forestry, were the only sowing ground from which he might reap a reciprocal harvest of ideas and feelings.

There are martyrs, indeed, who suffer slow atrophy of mind, and an inner loneliness that eats the soul hollow, whose oblation is for a lifetime of years; and there are those whose travail is only of flesh and blood; and there are those, fewer than these, whose sacrifice is the purest form of joy. I think he was kin to the last. There must have been a simple something in him which made him happy with the simplest. This steady joy colors the surface of his picture, glowing from the depths. Many a time, toward evening, his robust figure, large in the sunset, must have loomed in the doorway, and his warm face, cheered

with a ruddy tinge, looked its own welcome into the dusky Chinese home, just before his friendly call went out, and the whole household of fathers, mothers, children and grandchildren, rose and ran to greet him. It would be a festal night, long to be remembered, with much eating and talking, laughing and praying, and a blessing shining from his face, as palpably as the misty light upon the low rice fields before the homestead.

The next morning, after the rice was eaten, weighty matters of grave import would be brought out. A pig had been stolen by the scoundrels of the large village under the bamboo grove; a law-suit was threatened, or money was demanded by the stronger party for the procession of idols; or the official at the county-seat was extorting strange taxes from the hard-pressed people. Where was the right? How should they behave as Christians and not be utterly downtrodden? It was then that he rose into the true ambassador of Jesus Christ, and the majesty of judgment rested upon him, as upon the " bearded counsellor of God." His lips spoke peace. At the bottom of his buoyant power was a drop of spirit, serene and deep; and this calm deposit rose and diffused itself over this troubled aspect of the life he lived with the simple Christian folk of Chinese cities and quiet countrysides. Once, in a great quarrel between pagan and Christian, in the Hokchiang country, his decision had been against the faithful, but the fame of the righteous judgment lingers to this day, and the name of

Christ became a sweet savor in that region to many who never knew of Him in any other way. Those were the dark ages in all the low-sea country, where sunken roads wound away to mysterious places on the ragged coast; where hidden villages were still the rendezvous of sea robbers and freebooters, and where lurking bands found easy-going and good hunting on the narrow trail. There were strange disappearances. The traveler or merchant returning from the city, and footing slowly down the afternoon, would find himself suddenly alone. Before he was aware of the import of this, the dark squad was debouching from the covert; the onset followed, swift and silent; there was a cry, then ominous stillness; black figures moved in rapid silhouette along the twilight horizon, and a solitary one lay heaped across the path, but moved no more.

Of such men, victim and robber, were his neighbors; for they had both fallen among thieves; and he understood the fifth beatitude and beautifully embossed it in the visible deed. Very literally must these early followers of the Lamb construe the law of love, which, all too often for the frail faith of Christendom, has meant actually the loving of the robber, the assailant, and the murderer. Very stern, and with an edge of mortal sharpness, must the law of love have fallen from his lips in those clashing times of right and wrong. He suffered with these friends, more than for them. He saw them as they were, and he saw them in God. He lived for months at a

time in their dim interiors, and his soul found its home in the brown shadows of their eyes. I do not think he was assimilated to the crude mass of life in which he lived. It was more that he infolded theirs with his own golden current of being, which kept its sphery balance, quite distinct, yet not apart, from the homely element in which it hung. He was pure in heart, and it was this enlarging drop, with its cleansing blue of the living Spirit, which kept his vision true and clear. So these poor faces and withered souls discerned something besides their own line and hue imaged in his heart; and because the image was patiently the same and changed not, they began to be like to what they beheld; to be what they really were, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

The pure heart made him strong. It was the chain armor of the crusading knight, the secret lance of Galahad, in the holy warfare of his lonely life. That is all that seems essential to him now. He walks his way with the spring of youth, a high-hearted hero to the poor; a friendly sun-treader, happy in walking the old earth-ways which still show the warm pressure of his manly tread; and having never seen him in the flesh, I cannot think of him as bent or whitened by timely age. In fact, his years were not great, and there was no time for the long serene senescence which lays the circlet on the brows of those who endure, seeing things invisible, far into the eve. With him it was a sudden break from early evening sunlight to the sacred splendors of the summer morn. He

walks still in those old paths which his feet made years ago, and we, who tread them now, know his company well; feeling it as a human nearness amid the swarming crowds, and again as a communing spirit on the mountain paths—something that might suddenly shine out of the all-embossing presence—if eyes were fresh enough for the sacred surprise of such a miracle.

The elements of this sketch are limned deep and bright and clear upon fleshly tablets; and yet not all of flesh. They were gleaned from the hearts of the Chinese, who so peopled his own heart. And in theirs he is walking still, an apostle indeed, in the white line of the true succession, where stand all those who are linked by the Spirit of Christ to the Living God.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1934
1938
1941
1954

DATE DUE

BV 3427 .S58 S5 1912

Sites, Mrs. Sarah (Moore),
1838-1912.

Nathan Sites

,948

nited Theological Seminary Library
AIN BV3427.S58 S5 1912
es, Mrs. S Nathan Sites :
3 0645 0004 6423 6